

FADE IN:

EXT. COAL MINE - NIGHT

SUPER: "CENTRALIA, PENNSYLVANIA - MAY 27th, 1962".

Armored flamethrower vehicles halt at the mouth of the mine. Armed SOLDIERS, wearing gun muffler EARMUFFS, cluster around the entrance. Large spotlights illuminate the area.

A low-frequency HUM reverberates from an unknown location. It switches to a HIGHER PITCH then tapers off. The soldiers remove their earmuffs. They exchange glances.

Bloodcurdling SCREAMS pierce the silence.

INT. COAL MINE - SAME

COAL MINERS, elderly in appearance, frantically race toward the exit. The younger-looking miners don't move a muscle.

Obscured by running shadows, the large spotlights outside the mine only reveal slivers of what's chasing them.

Vicious SNARLING and GROWLING echo within the mine.

GENERAL BOOTH (30's), stone-faced, stands just outside the entrance. A cigar protrudes from underneath his thick handlebar mustache.

The SNARLS and GROWLS grow louder. Each miner is ripped to shreds.

Shadows no longer conceal the identity of the monsters: GIANT RATS. Before the monstrous rats have a chance to escape the mine, the general signals his men to FIRE their weapons.

Streams of ROARING fire from the flamethrower vehicles enter the mine and incinerate the bulk of the rats. The ones that evade the flames are riddled with GUNFIRE.

The soldiers cease fire. Silence.

The general's two-way RADIO blares a distress call --

SOLDIER'S VOICE

-- General, we have growers! I repeat, we have growers!

GENERAL BOOTH

(in radio)

How many?!

SOLDIER'S VOICE
Three confirmed, General! And
they're heading straight for us --

The soldier's voice ends abruptly with a SCREAM of terror.

GENERAL BOOTH
Corporal? Are you there?! Answer
me, dammit!

Nothing.

The general throws down his cigar in frustration. Stomps it out. He rushes toward a military jeep. A SOLDIER approaches.

SOLDIER #1
General, what're your orders?

GENERAL BOOTH
We light the town.

He climbs into the jeep. Drives off.

FADE OUT.

A small neighborhood.

SUPER: "DEFIANCE, OHIO - SPRING, 1995".

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - RICK'S BEDROOM - MORNING

POSTERS plaster the walls: everything from heavy metal bands to horror films.

RICK (18), tall and lanky, stares at a photograph of his girlfriend while playing a melodic RIFF on his electric guitar. His hair is pitch black and unruly. He wears black jeans and a black shirt with a rock band printed on the front. His lips and fingernails are black. He's a typical goth.

The doorknob to his bedroom door JIGGLES. The door is locked. He HEARS a light tap. He knows it's his sister ABIGAIL.

RICK
(annoyed)
What do you want, Abby?

ABIGAIL (O.S.)
Some of us are trying to sleep.

She ends her rant with a KICK to the door. THUD!

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Stupid.

Rick turns up his amp and retorts with a HEAVY RIFF. Abigail resorts to POUNDING on the door.

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

Knock it off, Rick!

RICK

Quit bangin' on my door!

ABIGAIL (O.S.)

I'm telling mom!

RICK

Tell mom! I don't care!

Their mother CLAIRE answers from the other side of the bedroom wall.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Both of you shut the hell up!

INT. RONNY'S HOUSE - RONNY'S BEDROOM - SAME

RONNY (18), short and portly, stares at himself in a body-length mirror. He wears a black t-shirt with a red "BIOHAZARD" emblem printed on the front. His pants are jagged and adorned with safety pins. His jet black hair is below his shoulders and highlighted with reddish stripes that match the red on his shirt. He's a goth -- tries to be.

GANGSTA RAP plays from his stereo.

WITHOUT WARNING --

he breaks into song and dance.

His father ADAM (late 40's) barges in. Heads straight for the volume knob. Turns it down.

ADAM

Don't give our neighbors more reasons to hate us.

RONNY

I thought you guys left already.

ADAM

So, our absence gives you the right to act like a fool? Is that it?

(a beat)

Listen. There's money on the table.
Don't spend it unless you
absolutely have to. And whatever
messes you make --

RONNY
(finishing his sentence)
...Clean it up. Yes, I know.

Adam embraces Ronny. Kisses his forehead.

ADAM
Miss you already, Son.

STUART (40) enters. Spots an opportunity to use a finger
camera.

STUART
(feminine voice)
Kodak moment. Click.

Stuart pulls on Adam's arm.

STUART
C'mon, honey. Our flight leaves in
an hour. We're gonna be late.

ADAM
Bye, Son.

Adam ruffles Ronny's hair and steps out.

RONNY
Have a great time, Dad.

STUART
What am I? Chopped liver?

RONNY
Have a great time, Stuart.

Stuart shoots him a look. The first name basis doesn't work
for him.

STUART
I thought we were beyond this?

RONNY
Have a great time... Mom.

STUART
You see? That wasn't so hard.

Stuart winks.

STUART
Be safe, kiddo.

He steps out.

RONNY
(to self)
Safe? This is Defiance. Nothing
ever happens around here.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Rick struggles to walk with a heap of books in his arms.

His girlfriend ISABEL (18) walks beside him. She's dressed casually. Her makeup is caked on. She carries nothing but attitude.

STUDENTS manage to bump into Rick, causing him to drop books and have to fetch them.

Rick and Isabel finally reach the end of the hall. She opens her locker, but not for Rick's sake. Rather than help put away her own books, she admires herself in a mirror attached to the inside. She reaches in her pocket. Extracts a small bottle of PERFUME. Squirts herself. Returns it to her pocket.

RICK
I know you have plans with your
friends tonight, but I was kinda
hoping you could, maybe, skip out.

Rick routinely places each book in its rightful spot.

ISABEL
Why would I do that?

RICK
Well, I wrote you another song, and
I wanted to play it for you.

Rick holds out a book. She takes it.

ISABEL
Listen, Rick. I don't know how else
to tell you this, so I'm just gonna
come out and say it.
(a beat)
I think we should start seeing
other people.

RICK
You're breaking up with me?

ISABEL
Technically, no. I sorta broke up
with you last week.

RICK
Last week?!

ISABEL
Stop! Just stop! Trust me. This
isn't easy for me, either.

RICK
You're making it look easy.

ISABEL
I can't help that I'm a strong
woman.

Rick exposes razor cuts on his inner forearm. They spell out
the name: "ISABEL".

RICK
What about this?! Doesn't this mean
anything to you?!

ISABEL
You don't need to shout.

RICK
I'm not shouting!

Isabel SLAMS her locker door, her way of cutting him off.

ISABEL
We're done! Get over it!

She storms off. Rick lets her leave.

RICK
You can forget about your new song!

ISABEL
Fine by me! The first one sucked!

Rick wallows in anger and disappointment.

RICK
Shit.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CHEMISTRY LAB - LATER
STUDENTS enter and take their seat.

A CHEMISTRY TEACHER (50's) situates lab equipment on a countertop.

Ronny approaches a glass aquarium. He removes the lid. Two small hairless LAB RATS seem excited to see him. Their names are displayed on the aquarium, but Ronny has his own picked out.

RONNY

Hi, Little Joe Pesci. Hi, Little Kate Moss. You guys miss me?

He reaches into his pocket. Pulls out two small pieces of cheese. Feeds them. Applies the lid. Takes his seat.

LATER

The teacher scribbles an equation on the chalkboard and goes off on a tangent about chemicals and compounds...

Rick is not the least bit attentive. On a sheet of notebook paper, he draws a grotesque monster pulling a heart out of a human. The human resembles himself.

Ronny recites Joe Pesci movie quotes.

KATE (18), pretty and knows it, chews gum and plays with her hair. She shoots Ronny a nasty look, growing annoyed with each passing second.

KATE

(low but forceful)

Can you be any more annoying, Ronny? Can't you talk to yourself after class or something?

RONNY

(with Joe Pesci voice)

You know what, Kate? I think you've gotten the wrong impression about me. I think in all fairness, I should explain to you exactly what it is that I do --

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

Is there something you want to share with the rest of us, Mr. Pesci?

Ronny ditches the Joe Pesci voice.

RONNY

I'm sorry. It's just I can't hear you with...

Kate Moss over here, trying to sell me mascara. In the middle of class. You believe that?

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
Kate Moss?

RONNY
She thinks she's Kate Moss.

KATE
I do not!

RONNY
Quit lying. Every girl wants to be Johnny Depp's girlfriend.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
Okay! Enough!

KATE
(under breath)
Screw Johnny Depp.

RONNY
You wish.

KATE
Shut up, freak!

RONNY
Freak? Is that the best you got?
'Cause I can do this all day.

KATE
You look like you flunked out of clown school.

RONNY
(with Joe Pesci voice)
Clown? Oh, so, now I'm a clown? Do I somehow amuse you? Am I here to make you laugh? Am I amusing to you? How am I a freakin' clown?!

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
Ronny, go to the office!

RONNY
What?! Why me?!

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
I don't tolerate disruptions. You know that.

RONNY
(points at Kate)
What about fake Moss?!

The teacher remains stoic, ignoring the question.

RONNY
You kiddin' me?

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
(raising a brow)
We're all waiting.

Kate snickers at Ronny as he gets up from his desk.

Ronny heads toward the exit. Just before stepping out of the lab, he turns and says to the class --

RONNY
-- One day, when Hell has no more room, zombies are gonna walk the earth. And you're gonna wish you had friends like me and Rick.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
(correcting his grammar)
Like Rick and I.

RONNY
Rick and you? You don't know nothing about no living dead.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
A triple negative. That's impressive.

RONNY
Well, trust me, there's more where that came from.

Ronny points an angry finger at different classmates.

RONNY
Mark my words. You're all zombie grub. All of you!

He quickly exits before anyone can respond to his comments.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER
I apologize for the distraction.

Rick finishes his drawing and leans back with admiration.

GERTRUDE (18), an eccentric punk-rocker chick with rainbow-colored hair, sits nearby. She glances at Rick's artwork. Their conversation is just above a whisper.

GERTRUDE
Nice artwork, Rick.

RICK
Thanks.

GERTRUDE
I have one at home just like it.
Not as detailed as yours. Mine is
more abstract.

RICK
You draw?

GERTRUDE
I'm sort of a mood painter, I
guess. Sometimes words can't
express what we really feel, ya
know?

RICK
Yeah.

Gertrude notices a bunch of spit wads in Rick's hair. As a kind gesture, she attempts to pick them out. Rick quickly pulls away.

GERTRUDE
Relax. You're single now. I think
it's safe.

RICK
Word travels fast.

GERTRUDE
Actually, your drawing gave it
away. I've had my share of break-
ups. Trust me. You'll live.

Gertrude reassures him with a smile.

GERTRUDE
(gestures Rick's hair)
May I?

Rick, a bit confused, slightly leans toward her. She grabs a spit wad from his hair. Shows it to him.

RICK
Thanks.

GERTRUDE

Don't thank me, yet.

She picks out a few more. CHORTLES come from the back of the lab.

Rick turns around to see what's so funny. Just as he turns, a spit wad hurls through the air. Hits him between the eyes. DEUCE (18), a football jock, aims a straw at him.

DEUCE

Bullseye.

Deuce high fives his two jock buddies TIN MAN (18) and SCARECROW (18).

Rick wipes the spit wad off his face and begins shaking out his hair. When he's finished, he glares at Deuce and his crew.

DEUCE

Are you gonna cry?

TIN MAN

No one likes a crybaby.

SCARECROW

Someone hand Rick a tissue, please.

The teacher looks over at Rick, oblivious to the situation.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

Rick, I can't have you crying.

RICK

I'm not crying!

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

I know about friendships, but Ronny brought it on himself.

RICK

I'm not crying about Ronny!

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

Well, what are you crying about?

RICK

Nothing! Do you see any tears running down my face?!

The teacher is taken aback by his sudden outburst.

CHEMISTRY TEACHER

If you would like to join your friend in the office, you have my blessing. Otherwise, take it down a notch.

Rick smirks. Salutes the teacher.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - LATER

MS. DAISY (30's), an extremely attractive principal, sits at her desk. Ronny sits across from her, guilt-faced.

MS. DAISY

I'm really getting tired of Joe Pesci and Kate Moss.

RONNY

I'm sorry, Ms. Daisy.

MS. DAISY

Sorry doesn't cut it anymore, Ronny. You need to start taking ownership of your actions.

Ms. Daisy leans back in her chair, releasing a long frustrated sigh.

MS. DAISY

What would your parents think if they had to come in on a Friday to discuss your behavior?

RONNY

They're away on a business trip.

MS. DAISY

Of course, they are.

RONNY

Even if they were here, they'd just try to sell you cosmetics or something. They don't care what I do, really.

MS. DAISY

Well then, what should I do with you?

Ms. Daisy's telephone rings, distracting her for a few seconds. She glances at the caller ID.

RONNY
 (mutters)
 You can start by licking my balls.

MS. DAISY
 What was that?

Ronny, caught off guard, quickly takes notice of a jar of gumballs on the bookshelf behind her.

RONNY
 (stammering)
 Uhh, oh, nothing. Just... I was wondering if I could have some gumballs.

MS. DAISY
 Excuse me a minute, Ronny. I need to take this.

She answers the call. While engaged in conversation, she gets up from her desk. Reaches for the jar of gumballs to suffice Ronny. The jar, slightly out of reach, causes her to stretch. The back of her blouse untucks, exposing butt cleavage. WE HEAR something like: "Let's Get It On" by Marvin Gaye.

IN SLOW MOTION, Ms. Daisy leans over her desk, extending the jar of gumballs. The top button on her blouse unbuttons. Ronny's mouth drops. He sees breasts bouncing around.

END SLOW MOTION AND MUSIC

Ms. Daisy HANGS UP the phone. She shakes the jar of gumballs, trying to get Ronny to take one. He's stuck in la-la land.

MS. DAISY
 Are you gonna just sit there? Or you gonna grab one?

RONNY
 (mumbles)
 I'm willing to make an exception... if you don't mind getting fired.

MS. DAISY
 What?

Ronny snaps out of his trance, realizing that she's talking about the gumballs, not her breasts.

RONNY
 I'm sorry. What was your question?

MS. DAISY
I thought you wanted gumballs.

RONNY
Oh, yeah. Thanks for reminding me.

Ronny rummages through the colors of gumballs. The majority are blue. Not finding what he wants, he waves the jar away.

RONNY
I'm not a big fan of blue balls.

MS. DAISY
Suit yourself.

Ms. Daisy sets the jar aside. Takes her seat.

MS. DAISY
So, where were we?

RONNY
You were about to send me back to class.

MS. DAISY
Nice try, bucko.

RONNY
I apologize for disrupting class.
It won't happen again.

MS. DAISY
Do you know what the definition of insanity is?

RONNY
(matter-of-factly)
It's country music.

MS. DAISY
No. It's the expectation of a different result by implementing the same idea over and over. Do you know what I'm trying to say?

RONNY
You lost me.

MS. DAISY
I've been so lenient toward you, hoping things would change.

RONNY

Wait. You're actually gonna punish me this time?

MS. DAISY

I don't want to, but you don't leave me much choice.

RONNY

So, what're we talkin'? A paddle?

MS. DAISY

We don't allow that anymore.

RONNY

I won't tell anybody.

MS. DAISY

You want me to spank you?

RONNY

It might sink in better.

MS. DAISY

I was thinking more, like, Saturday school.

RONNY

You mean, like, tomorrow school?

MS. DAISY

Yeah. And it starts at nine o'clock in the morning. So, try not to be late. Okay?

RONNY

How 'bout another chance, Ms. Daisy? To prove myself.

MS. DAISY

After tomorrow morning, you'll have plenty of chances to prove yourself. Not just here, but everywhere.

RONNY

If you say so.

MS. DAISY

I know so. Because I believe in you.

INT. CHEMISTRY LAB - SAME

The school bell RINGS, dismissing class. Students rush toward the door. Deuce heads up the aisle. His buddies trail behind. Deuce snatches Rick's drawing and walks away with it.

RICK
(leaping from his seat)
Hey, give it back!

Scarecrow and Tin Man block Rick's attempt to retrieve it. Deuce scrunches the sketch into a ball.

DEUCE
Oh, you mean this? Well, come and get it.

Rick squeezes through Tin Man and Scarecrow and lunges toward Deuce. Rick is now caught in a game of Piggy In The Middle which leads out into

THE HALLWAY

where STUDENTS gather to watch the display of bullying at its finest. For several minutes, the wadded up sketch goes back and forth between Deuce, Tin Man, and Scarecrow.

Random students want a piece of the action. Before long, Rick has no idea who has his sketch. He finally gives up.

RICK
(to everyone)
Assholes!

An immediate HUSH falls on the crowd of students.

DEUCE
What did you just call me?

Rick swallows hard.

DEUCE
I knew you were strange and
bizarre, Rick, comin' to school
every day lookin' like Wednesday
Addams and shit. But I didn't know
you were stupid.

Deuce and his buddies approach him, pounding their fists into their palms. Rick backs into a locker.

DEUCE

I'm going to enjoy rearranging your face. Who knows? You might even look normal when I'm done.

Gertrude breaks through the crowd. She places herself in the line of fire.

GERTRUDE

(to Deuce)

You're gonna have to go through me first.

Everyone bursts into LAUGHTER.

RICK

(whispers to Gertrude)

Not sure what you're doing, but it isn't helping. I look like a total wuss right now.

GERTRUDE

Trust me.

DEUCE

Get outta the way, Gert.

GERTRUDE

I know a lot of things about you, Deuce. It'd be a shame to lose your scholarship over something so petty.

DEUCE

You wouldn't dare.

GERTRUDE

Try me, juicehead. I got nuthin' to lose.

DEUCE

The whole school knows that.

GERTRUDE

(warningly)

One more word.

Deuce and his buddies restrain themselves. Out of nowhere, the wadded sketch smacks Rick in the face and falls at his feet. Rick picks it up.

Gertrude grabs Rick by his wrist. Hauls him away.

DEUCE
This isn't over, loser!

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Ronny stands across from the principal's office. Rick comes around the corner.

RICK
Hey, bud. What's up?

Ronny begins sniffing the air. Tracks the scent back to Rick's shirt. Shoots Rick a look of suspicion.

RONNY
You're wearing Luscious Nightfall.
There's only one girl in the whole
school that wears that. And it's
not Isabel.

RICK
Suddenly, you're the perfume guru?

RONNY
My parents sell the stuff for a
living. I know my perfumes.

RICK
What's with the third degree?

RONNY
You can relax. I'm not gonna tell
Isabel your dirty little secret.

RICK
Makes no difference. We broke up.

RONNY
For real? When did this happen?

RICK
Last week.

RONNY
And you're just now telling me?

RICK
I didn't find out about it 'til
today.

RONNY
(smiling)
Sorry to hear that, bro.

RICK
Doesn't look like it.

RONNY
I'm not gonna lie. That's the best thing I heard all day.

RICK
How can you say that?

RONNY
Very easily.

RICK
You didn't like her?

RONNY
Are you kiddin' me? You didn't even like her.

RICK
Of course, I did. She was my girlfriend.

RONNY
She was your drill sergeant. I'm surprised you didn't follow her in the girls' restroom to wipe her ass. Or did you?

An awkward silence between them.

RICK
Okay. Let's hear it.

Ronny takes a moment to gather his thoughts.

RONNY
All right. She wears more makeup than both of us put together. Her weave looks like a dead animal. Her nails are fake. Everything about her is fake. You might as well paste her face on a pillow.

(a beat)

She wears Suave Lady for crying out loud. My parents refuse to sell that. They use it to repel bugs and mice from the house. And guess what? It works.

RICK
I thought you were my friend.

RONNY

That's why I kept my mouth shut.

Ronny glances at the analog CLOCK, hanging above the office door. A look of anticipation spreads across his face. The principal's office door opens. Ms. Daisy steps out, turns to lock the door. She doesn't notice Ronny gawking at her.

IN SLOW MOTION, Ms. Daisy walks away. WE HEAR something like: "You Sexy Thing" by Hot Chocolate.

Ms. Daisy exits the school.

END SLOW MOTION AND MUSIC

RONNY

Guess what flavor her ass was today.

RICK

You watch way too much porn.

RONNY

Just guess.

RICK

Ass doesn't taste like pecan pie, Ronny.

RONNY

That was yesterday. Today it's sheet cake.

Rick looks up at the clock.

RICK

It's probably shit cake by now.

RONNY

(irritated)

You just had to go there. Didn't you?

Ronny walks away, defeated.

RONNY

I saw Ms. Daisy practically naked today. Now, none of that matters.

A look of remorse appears on Rick's face. He catches up with Ronny.

RICK

My bad, Ronny. I got a lot of things on my mind right now. I'm sorry for screwin' up your fantasy.

RONNY

No worries. I'll get over it.

RICK

If it makes you feel any better, I almost got my ass kicked by Deuce. If it wasn't for Gertrude, I'd be dead.

RONNY

Dude. You were saved by a chick? Wow. I thought my day was bad.
(a beat)
You know what we need? Slushies.

They exit the school.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - LATER

A small rat scampers across a shiny tiled floor. It heads straight for a mousetrap. WHAP! The rat triggers the trap but remains alive, kicking and jerking.

A CLERK (30's), aware of the mousetrap being set off, sets aside their handheld game console. Grabs the mousetrap. Watches the rat struggle to release itself.

CLERK

Relax, little guy. You'll be dead by morning. It's all good.

The clerk tosses the mousetrap into a wastebasket and returns to the counter.

Rick and Ronny enter. They head straight for the slush machine in the back of the store.

They're spotted by JULIE (18), big-boned and outgoing. She zones in on Ronny like a tigress on the prowl. WE HEAR something like: "Me So Horny" by 2 Live Crew.

Rick begins mixing his favorite flavors while Ronny waits his turn. Julie approaches Ronny with an unbreakable smile.

END MUSIC

JULIE

Hello, Ronny.

Ronny seems on edge by her presence.

RONNY
Hey, Julie.

JULIE
Whatcha doin'?

Ronny lifts an empty slush cup in response.

JULIE
Green apple is my favorite. What's yours?

RONNY
Wild cherry.

JULIE
(mutters)
I got your wild cherry.

RONNY
What?

JULIE
My second favorite's wild cherry.

RONNY
Oh.

Julie unwraps a popsicle. Takes a lick.

JULIE
No slush for me today. You know why? It's Friday. Popsicle day.

Rick makes his way to the front counter. Ronny steps up to the slush machine. Julie moves up with him.

JULIE
Do you have a favorite popsicle?

RONNY
Nope.

JULIE
Wanna know what mine is?

Ronny pulls the "Wild Cherry" lever. Fills his cup.

Julie simulates an amateur blowjob with her popsicle. She deep throats it. Gags. Coughs out a lung.

Ronny avoids eye contact. He takes his slush to the counter. Julie follows him like a puppy.

Rather than mind the counter, the clerk keeps playing the handheld game console.

RICK
Uhh, hello?

CLERK
Wait a sec. I'm busy.

RICK
I've been waiting here for, like,
two minutes.

CLERK
What's another minute gonna hurt?

Julie struggles but manages to reach over the counter. She snatches the clerk's handheld console.

JULIE
I'm gonna hurt you in a minute!
Ring their slushies up before I
smash your little toy!

The clerk rings them up. Cash exchanges. Change is given.

JULIE
Now, ring up my popsicle before I
shove it up your ass!

The clerk rings it up. Julie politely hands over the console and the cash.

JULIE
Thank you, sweetie.

Ronny thanks Julie with a nod. Julie strokes her popsicle with the tip of her tongue in response.

EXT. RICK'S HOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT

A street light illuminates a driveway that leads to an open garage door. A MINIVAN is parked in the driveway.

There's an array of instruments inside the garage: Rick's electric guitar on a stand, a bass propped against a large speaker, and a drum set.

Rick tinkers with his amplifier, holding a slice of pizza.

RICK

Julie was about to whip some ass today. I think she wants your dick.

RONNY

That's too much ham for me. I'll stick with Ms. Daisy.

RICK

Ms. Daisy won't give you the time of day.

RONNY

She will someday.

The RUMBLE of a cracked tailpipe gets louder and louder. An old jalopy comes to a SCREECHING halt and parks in front of the house.

JERRY (50's), a shirtless hippie with greasy hair, climbs out of the car. He carries a large case of beer in one hand and a cigar in his other. His skin, including his torn jeans, is blotched with dried paint.

JERRY

Whaddup, bitches?! Y'all ready to rock?! Or what?!

RICK

Three hours ago when the sun was still up.

JERRY

Hey! Calm down, Beetlejuice! I'm the only one in this group that has a job! Maybe one day when you grow hair on your little privates, you'll understand what it's like to be a man with priorities!

Jerry approaches the drum set with a scowl.

JERRY

Now, I'm pissed! Way to go, fuck heads!

RONNY

I couldn't help but notice that you pluralized *fuck heads*. How did I get brought into this?

JERRY

Quit your whining, little baby.

Jerry gets situated at the drums. Places the case of beer on the floor tom. He SCREAMS at the top of his lungs -- AAAGGGGHHHHH! The veins in his neck look like they're about to burst through his skin. He cracks open a beer. Chugs it down. Crushes the can with his forehead. Throws the empty can at Ronny.

RONNY

(whispers to Rick)

Thanks for pissing him off. You know he's gonna take it out on me all night, only because he likes your mom.

RICK

He'll get over it.

RONNY

Not anytime soon.

JERRY

You pansies want a beer?

RICK

Told ya.

They decline his offer.

JERRY

Hey, where's that fine ass girlfriend of yours?

RICK

She's not coming.

JERRY

Why not?

RONNY

They broke up.

Jerry begins laughing.

JERRY

Hot damn!

RICK

You didn't like her, either?

JERRY

Hell, no. She treated you like shit. How'd you put up with that?

RONNY
I'll tell you how. She has one of
these...

Ronny makes the shape of a "VAGINA" with his fingers.

JERRY
Yep. Leave it to beaver. That's
what made me put up with Regina's
shit all those years.

Rick grabs the remote garage door opener.

JERRY
Wait. What are you doing?

RICK
I'm shutting the garage door.

JERRY
Why?

RICK
It's late. I got neighbors.

JERRY
Man, screw your neighbors. I'm
claustrophobic.

RICK
They're gonna call the police.

JERRY
Fuck the police. I said I'm
claustrophobic.

Rick sets the garage door remote aside.

RICK
Fine. I'll let you deal with them.

JERRY
I ain't dealing with shit. This
ain't my house.

UNEXPECTEDLY --

an EXPLOSION is heard in the distance. KABOOM!

JERRY
What the hell?

Rick and Ronny exchange glances.

RICK

Ivan?

RONNY

(agreeing)

Ivan.

RICK

I swear, he's gonna kill himself.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - SWIMMING POOL AREA - SAME

The school janitor PETE (40's) wears HEADPHONES over his ears. His name tag reads: "PETE". A portable cassette player is fastened to his belt. He places a mop and bucket near a set of double doors. From a shelf, he grabs his lunch sack, a clipboard, and a flashlight.

He approaches a stairway and descends into

THE BOILER ROOM

which is dimly lit by a single light bulb.

Pete sets aside the lunch sack. With the flashlight, he inspects the gauges on an old boiler adjacent to a large beastly GAS FURNACE. He makes a few adjustments to valves. Scribbles something on the clipboard.

A few RATS scurry across his feet, startling him.

PETE

Blasted rats! I'm gonna get you!
You wait and see! I'll getcha! You
think I'm playin' with ya?!

The rats scamper toward a corner. He follows them with the flashlight and watches them disappear into the darkness of a large gaping hole in the wall. Pete pulls a bologna sandwich from his lunch sack. Uses the cheese slice from his sandwich to bait a rat trap. Places the trap inside the hole.

PETE

Dinner is served.

He nestles in his favorite spot with his necessities: his headphones, his snack, a crossword puzzle, and a short pencil.

INT. RICK'S GARAGE - SAME

Drumsticks CLACK together, setting the tempo for their song. Ronny begins plucking away on the bass. Rick strums his guitar like a madman. The drums join in.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - STREET - SAME

A bright full moon. It's suddenly accompanied by what appears to be an enormous SPACECRAFT with flashing lights. At the moment, only a few vehicles occupy the main drag.

A low-frequency HUM reverberates as the craft hovers above.

SPECTATORS begin gathering around to view the UFO.

The HUM switches to a high pitched SIGNAL, causing people to cover their ears. THE ELDERLY seem unaffected.

INTERCUT - PEOPLE UNAFFECTED BY THE UFO SIGNAL

-- IN RICK'S GARAGE - Rick approaches the microphone. Begins to SING. His lyrics are inaudible, overpowered by the loud MUSIC. Ronny thrashes his head while plucking the bass. Jerry drums with one arm, attempting to open a beer. Nails it.

-- IN A WEIGHT ROOM - Deuce, Scarecrow, and Tin Man lift weights. A stereo nearby blasts loud alternative MUSIC.

-- IN ISABEL'S BATHROOM - Isabel uses a BLOW DRYER on her wet hair. A bath towel wraps her naked body.

-- IN GERTRUDE'S BEDROOM - Gertrude dances to headphone MUSIC and paints an abstract that resembles Rick.

-- IN CARLITO'S BEDROOM - CARLITO (male, 30's), a Puerto Rican with a rat tail hair style, plays a video game on his console. His television speakers are turned way up, generating GUNFIRE and EXPLOSIONS.

-- INDOOR GUN RANGE - OFFICER LONG (male, mid 20's) and OFFICER HARDY (male, mid 20's), both wearing EARMUFFS, shoot at targets with shadowy criminals printed on them.

BACK TO SCENE

In a flash, the UFO soars away, leaving most of the onlookers in a daze. The affected (CUCKOOS) drop their hands to their side. Blood oozes from their ears. MOANS and GROANS follow.

The elderly back away from the cuckoos, frightened by their sudden awkward behavior.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - BOILER ROOM - SAME

Pete finishes the last line of his crossword puzzle. Shoves the rest of the sandwich in his mouth. Removes his headphones. He hears the WHAP of the rat trap. It shakes violently.

PETE

Ooh, I get me a big one.

He grabs the flashlight. Approaches the gaping hole. Shines the flashlight into the darkness. Two large glimmering eyes stare back at him. His mouth drops.

WITHOUT WARNING --

an OVER-SIZED rat pounces on him. He YELLS. It rips at his flesh, biting and clawing. Blood splatters everywhere.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

The clerk, now a cuckoo, stands at the counter, MUMBLING indistinctly. Blood drips from their ears.

The wastebasket is tipped on its side. An OVER-SIZED rat charges and topples the clerk. The clerk expresses a silly grin while being torn apart.

INT. CHURCH - DAY (RICK'S DREAM)

Rick sits on the front pew, dressed in his Sunday best. No one else is in attendance but him. A beam of light shines down from a stained-glass window.

A MINISTER (40's), clean-cut and handsome, preaches with intensity from behind a pulpit.

MINISTER

Love is patient! Love is kind! It
does not envy! It does not boast!
It is not proud! It does not
dishonor others!

A look of anger and disbelief spreads on Rick's face.

MINISTER

It is not self-seeking! It is not
easily angered! It keeps no record
of wrongs --

RICK
 (interrupting)
 You're a hypocrite! What do you
 know about love?! You left us!

MINISTER
 I didn't leave you. I didn't leave
 Abigail. I left your mother. And
 you wanna know why?
 (a beat)
 I found someone better! The same
 reason Isabel left you! You have
 nothing to offer! You're a bum! A
 wimp! You wear makeup! You let a
 girl fight your battle! You should
 be ashamed! You're a loser!

The light beam fades. Darkness thickens around Rick.

END RICK'S DREAM

Rick jolts up in bed, breathing heavily.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Ronny walks along a sidewalk, beatboxing. A girl lurches
 aimlessly in his direction. He recognizes her. It's Kate from
 school. She's a cuckoo. Blood drips from her ears.

RONNY
 Kate? Are you okay?

She doesn't respond.

RONNY
 Uhh, looks like you're bleeding.
 Might want to, uhh, see someone
 about that.

He SNAPS his fingers in front of her blank face.

RONNY
 Hello?

She MUMBLES indistinctly. WE HEAR something like: "Your
 Mama's On Crack Rock" by The Dogs. Ronny steps around her and
 walks away.

RONNY
 I knew she was a crackhead. You
 can't be that hot and not be on
 drugs.

END MUSIC

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

Ronny walks to the front entrance. Tries several doors -- they're locked. Presses his forehead against the door window. SOMETHING large scurries across a hallway. He thinks he saw something. Dismisses it.

RONNY

Where's everybody at?

He hears COMMOTION coming from the high school football field. He sees MILITARY TRUCKS pulling up. A large CAGE is positioned in the center of the field. It resembles the kind used to trap racoons and squirrels. Only this one is the size of a semi-trailer.

Ronny shrugs, seemingly unamused. Leaves the premises.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - RICK'S BEDROOM - LATER

Ronny lounges on a large bean bag. He's alone, flipping through a nudie magazine. Begins caressing his crotch. Looks around, nervously. Sets the magazine aside. WE HEAR something like: "More, More, More" by Andrea True.

RONNY

There never was a Saturday school,
Ms. Daisy. You just wanted me all
alone. Well, here I am. All
thirteen inches of me.

He unbuttons his pants. Jerks himself. A toilet FLUSHES.

END MUSIC

Ronny conceals his erection with the hem of his shirt. Chucks the nudie magazine.

Rick steps out of the bathroom. Ronny acts nonchalant.

RICK

What are you doing here? I thought
you had Saturday school.

RONNY

Nobody was there. Except for
recruiters.

RICK

Recruiters?

RONNY

I wonder if joining the army is the way to go. Travel the world. Chicks dig guys in uniform.

Rick staggers to his bed, grimacing in pain.

RONNY

What's the matter with you?

RICK

Too much pizza last night. Why didn't you stop me? You know what cheese does to my stomach.

Rick plops down on his bed. Hugs his body pillow -- there's a cut-out of Isabel's face taped to it.

RONNY

Last time I was constipated, I think I ripped myself. I was in pain for a week. I felt like I got pounded by a big black guy.

RICK

I wouldn't know anything about that.

RONNY

Well, neither would I. I'm just tryin' to draw you a picture.

Rick curiously sniffs the air.

RICK

What is that?

RONNY

What's what?

RICK

That smell.

RONNY

Smell? What smell?

RICK

How can you not smell that? What were you doing in here?

RONNY

Nothing.

RICK
Then why does my room smell like
rotten cheese?

RONNY
I don't know what you're talking
about.

RICK
You were playing with yourself.
Weren't you?

RONNY
No.

Rick spots the nudie magazine.

RICK
Explain how Miss March got here.

RONNY
It's Miss April.

RICK
Scrub your balls once in a while!

Rick opens the window above the bed to get fresh air.

RONNY
You can make fun of me all you
want. At least, I don't sleep with
a body pillow like a little girl.

RICK
Would you like some cheese with
your whine? Oh, I'm sorry. It looks
like you already have *cheese*.

RONNY
All right, that's it!

Ronny struggles to get up from the bean bag. He leaps on the
bed in an attempt to squash Rick. The bed breaks underneath
them. A LEG POST goes flying across the floor.

RICK
Way to go, douche bag! You just
broke my bed.
(shoves Ronny)
Get off me!

Ronny falls to the floor. THUMP! The bedroom door swings wide
open.

A WOMAN (40's), gorgeous but unkempt, staggers in with a glass of wine in one hand and a cigarette in the other. This is Rick's mother, Claire, who we now see.

CLAIRE

What the hell is going on in here?

Ronny stands to his feet. His pants drop to his ankles.

CLAIRE

Are you boys having sex?

RONNY

No, ma'am. I wouldn't dare. I respect your house.

Ronny lifts his pants. Zips. Buttons up.

CLAIRE

Good. 'Cause I don't mind homos swappin' spit. I just don't want them swappin' shit. I do the laundry. Am I clear on that?

RONNY

Yes, ma'am.

RICK

Mom, we're not having sex. And for the last time, I'm not gay. I have a girlfriend.

(a beat)

Well, uhh, I did. You remember Isabel? Right?

CLAIRE

That girl across the street?

RICK

Yeah.

CLAIRE

There's no way you were having sexual intercourse with that pretty little thing. Come on now.

RICK

How do you know?

CLAIRE

'Cause I ain't never seen her over here. That's how I know.

RICK

You're not always here.

CLAIRE

Honey, I only leave the house to buy cigarettes. There's no way you're getting your little pecker up and doing the nasty in five minutes.

RICK

Maybe the magic happens at her place. Ever think of that?

(a beat)

And it's not little.

CLAIRE

Don't kid yourself, dear. Who do you think changed your diapers?

Ronny chuckles. Claire guzzles the rest of her wine.

CLAIRE

If anyone around here is gonna have a big ding-a-ling, it's gonna be Ronny.

RICK

Now, why would you say that?

RONNY

Yeah, I'm a bit curious myself.

CLAIRE

Well, why else would you be with his fat ass? No offense, Ronald.

RONNY

None taken. Actually, if I was a white girl in a black club, I'd take that as a compliment.

Claire begins to sniff the air.

CLAIRE

Alright, who's been using my bleu cheese dressing without my permission?

Ronny nonchalantly smells his hand and places it behind his back.

CLAIRE
Leave my salad toppings alone,
people! Is that too hard to ask?!

Claire exits the bedroom, SLAMMING the door behind her. Rick climbs off the bed. Looks at the broken bedpost in disbelief.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Claire prepares the table for breakfast. Rick and Ronny walk by her.

CLAIRE
(to Rick)
Uhh, where do you think you're
going, young man?

RICK
Hardware store. We'll be back.

CLAIRE
You're not going anywhere without
breakfast. Sit down.

RICK
We're not hungry.

RONNY
What do you mean we're not hungry?
You got a mouse in your pocket?

Ronny takes a seat at the kitchen table, smacking his chops.

RONNY
What're we having?

CLAIRE
Breakfast burritos. They're long
and thick. I packed them extra
tight, so they explode in your
mouth.

RICK
Mom, really?

CLAIRE
What? I like 'em the same way.

She steps out of the kitchen.

CLAIRE (O.S.)
Make sure you put gas in the van!

RICK
Abigail borrowed it last!

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - PARKING LOT - LATER

Rick and Ronny climb out of the minivan and head toward the entrance.

RICK
I can't believe my mom thinks I'm gay.

RONNY
I can't believe she thinks I have a big willy. Does she gossip much?

RICK
Shut up.

RONNY
Just sayin'.

SUDDENLY --

a horn BLARES. The honk startles Rick and Ronny. They turn to find IVAN (mid 30's), a countryfied Russian, sitting in a lifted pickup truck. His cheek bulges with a wad of chew.

IVAN
(with Russian accent)
Hello, my friends!

RICK
You scared the crap out of me.

IVAN
Sorry!

RICK
Why are you yelling?

Ivan digs into his ears.

IVAN
Russian firecrackers!

RONNY
We knew that was you last night.

IVAN
Of course, it was me! I need excitement! My gun range is lonely! No one but me now!

He spits out his window.

RICK
I've been meaning to come out. Been
working on a lot of music lately.

IVAN
What did you say?!

RICK
I'll come out when I get a chance!

Ivan gives two thumbs up. Starts his truck.

IVAN
Wish I could stay and chat! I have
solyanka on the stove! I must go!

They say their goodbyes. Ivan pulls out of the parking lot.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Rick and Ronny enter. A small bell JINGLES above them,
announcing their entrance. MS. CARTWRIGHT (80's), soft-spoken
and warm-hearted, looks up from the counter.

MS. CARTWRIGHT
Hello, boys.

RICK
Hey, Ms. Cartwright.

MS. CARTWRIGHT
What can I do for you?

RONNY
(mutters)
How 'bout a gum job for the
birthday boy?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
What did you say?

RONNY
I said how 'bout a cookie for the
birthday boy?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
Wasn't it your birthday yesterday?

RONNY
You're thinking of last year.

MS. CARTWRIGHT
I'm so sorry. I forgot to bake
cookies this morning.

RONNY
You're losing it, Ms. Cartwright.

Rick gives Ronny a stiff nudge.

RICK
Leave her alone.

A decent GUN DISPLAY hangs on the wall behind the counter.

MS. CARTWRIGHT
I tell you what. Come back tomorrow
and I'll give you an extra cookie
to make up for my mistake.

RONNY
Oh, boy! I can't wait to have your
cookies in my mouth, Ms.
Cartwright. I bet when Mr.
Cartwright was alive, he got to
taste your cookies every day.

MS. CARTWRIGHT
He wouldn't have it any other way.

RONNY
And he probably got it every which
way, too. Huh?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
He most certainly did. If there
ever was a man who loved my moist
cookies, it was my husband.

RONNY
What's the secret to keeping your
cookies so moist?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
The secret is butter. That's all I
can say. Otherwise, it's no longer
a secret.

RONNY
You sure leave a lot to the
imagination, Ms. Cartwright.

RICK

I'm sorry to interrupt this delightful conversation, but all I need is a box of nails.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Nails are in aisle six, dear. On the far right side. Can't miss them.

RICK

Thank you.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

It's my pleasure.

Rick steps away, leaving Ronny and Ms. Cartwright to continue their conversation.

RONNY

You're too nice to people, Ms. Cartwright. People never learn when things are done for them.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Don't be absurd. You can never be too nice.

RONNY

I hate to burst your bubble, Ms. Cartwright, but there's a girl at school who was too nice to the football team this past season. It hurt them more than it helped.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

How so?

RONNY

Well, for confidentiality reasons, she'll remain nameless. But for the record, her name rhymes with Gertrude.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Interesting. I have a granddaughter named Gertrude. I believe, she's in your grade.

RONNY

You don't say. Well, it's hard for me to rhyme names, so if you don't mind, I'd like to stick with *Gertrude*.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

By all means.

RONNY

Anyway, Gertrude made it a point to shine their helmets before each game. For good luck, I guess.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

What a nice gesture.

RONNY

We almost lost every game.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

That's the team's fault, not hers. She was only being friendly.

RONNY

It almost sounds like you're sticking up for her.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Well, she's not here to defend herself.

RONNY

That's why I like you, Ms. Cartwright. Always sticking up for others. You could be Mother Teresa's stunt double.

Ms. Cartwright chuckles. Her dentures loosen. She pushes them back into her mouth. Ronny squirms in disgust.

RONNY

(mutters)

I was only kiddin' about that gum job.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

I'm sorry, dear. What was that?

RONNY

Uhh, I said I'm getting you a big box of butter for Christmas this year.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

You're so sweet, you give my cookies a run for their money.

RONNY

I wish everyone thought of me that way.

Rick approaches. Places the box of nails on the counter. Ms. Cartwright rings it up. Grabs a sales receipt book. Begins filling it out.

RONNY

Hey, Rick, guess what? Ms. Cartwright is Gertrude's grandmother.

RICK

Small world.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

As they say.

(a beat)

That'll be 3.24, hun.

Rick hands her cash.

RICK

Does she ever stop by?

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Oh, yes. My son usually helps me close up shop, but she's been doing it lately since he's on vacation. You're welcome to stop by later.

She hands Rick his change and receipt.

RICK

I just might.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - RICK'S BEDROOM - LATER

The bedpost repair is an absolute disaster. Nails jut out in every direction. The leg resembles a medieval weapon.

RICK

What do you think?

RONNY

I think... I'm gonna need a tetanus shot.

RICK

Did you offer to help me? No.

Ronny gives the shoddy job a double take.

RONNY

On second thought, I think we could use it if zombies ever broke in.

RICK

That's what I was going for.

RONNY

For real?

RICK

Don't be stupid.

SUDDENLY --

they hear SIRENS and COMMOTION coming from outside. They climb on the bed to get a better look out the window and watch as police cars and ambulances race by. A NEWS VAN follows behind. A helicopter WHOPS overhead.

Rick grabs a remote. Turns the TV on. ON THE TELEVISION, there's news coverage of the UFO. The bottom of the screen reads: "SPACE ALIENS IN DEFIANCE, OHIO? FRIENDS OR FOES?"

The bedpost gives way and flies across the room. Rick and Ronny don't seem to notice. Their eyes remain glued to the screen. The PRESIDENT makes a statement at a press conference, concerning the UFO.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

There's a KNOCK on the front door.

CLAIRE

Coming!

She opens the door, finding Officer Long and Officer Hardy.

CLAIRE

(to self)

Well, I'll be... My kids remembered my birthday. That's a first.

OFFICER LONG

Hello, ma'am.

CLAIRE

Hel-lo.

(steps aside)

Come on in, boys.

OFFICER LONG

Thank you.

The officers respectfully remove their hats as they enter. Claire sits on the couch, awaiting their stripper routine.

CLAIRE

You may commence whenever you're ready.

OFFICER LONG

I'm Officer Long. This is my partner, Officer Hardy.

CLAIRE

Long and Hard. That's easy to remember.

OFFICER LONG

(correcting her)
It's Hardy.

CLAIRE

I'm sure it is, but next time, don't spoil the ending. I enjoy surprises.

OFFICER LONG

I'm not sure if you're aware of what's going on, ma'am, but we're getting bombarded with calls left and right.

CLAIRE

Oh, I believe it. If you're in that big of a rush, you don't even have to dance. Just skip to the end. I'll fill in the gaps.

OFFICER LONG

Uhh, yeah.
(clears throat)
Did you hear anything unusual last night?

CLAIRE

Heck, no! My daughter and I couldn't hear anything. My son's band made a racket in the garage all night.

OFFICER LONG

Did you happen to notice anything out of the ordinary? Or see anything strange?

CLAIRE

Like what?

OFFICER LONG

Bright lights in the sky? That sort of thing.

CLAIRE

You mean, like, a UFO?

OFFICER LONG

Exactly.

CLAIRE

Nope. I was inside all night. I don't get out much. Not since the divorce. My husband had an affair. She had really big boobs. I'll give her that much. But there's no way that hoe was tighter than me.

OFFICER LONG

Bad things happen to good people.

CLAIRE

You can say that again.

OFFICER HARDY

(with deep voice)

Shit happens to good people.

CLAIRE

Ooh, you sound just like Barry White.

OFFICER HARDY

I get that a lot.

CLAIRE

Nothing gets me more in the mood like a Barry White song.

Claire GROWLS playfully and bites the air.

INT. RICK'S BEDROOM - SAME

Rick and Ronny are still glued to the television. The news goes to a commercial.

RICK

We need to go see Carlito. If there's anyone who knows about UFOs, it's him. He's all into Star Wars and shit.

They exit.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rick and Ronny stumble across an awkward situation. The police officers sit a little too close to Claire.

CLAIRE

...And I thought alimony would make me feel better, but it's just a reminder of what I used to have.

Claire glances over and sees Rick and Ronny.

CLAIRE

Oh, hi, honey.

She pulls herself away from the officers.

CLAIRE

I know what you're thinking. And I'm just as disappointed as you are. With their clothes still on, and all. But they turned out to be very good listeners. As long as I'm happy, that's what matters. Right, dear?

RICK

(confused)

Sure, Mom. Whatever you say.

Rick and Ronny head toward the front door.

CLAIRE

Did you put gas in the van?

RICK

We're just going across the street.

CLAIRE

That's not what I asked.

RICK

Abigail didn't.

CLAIRE
Then, I'll remind her of the rule
when she gets up, but in the
meantime --

Rick is already out of the house before Claire has a chance
to finish her sentence.

CLAIRE
Ronald, don't let him take the van
unless he puts gas in it. Please.

RONNY
You have my word, Ms. Miller.

CLAIRE
I'm counting on you. You're my guy.
Don't let me down.

RONNY
I won't.

Ronny exits, shutting the door behind him. Claire turns her
attention to the police officers.

CLAIRE
You'll have to excuse my son and
his boyfriend. They're very
impatient. You know teens and their
raging hormones nowadays. But I
don't mind us just talking.

EXT. ISABEL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Isabel watches Rick and Ronny rush across the street. She
steps off her porch and cuts them off.

ISABEL
Are you coming over here to beg me
back? If you are, it's not gonna
work. I'm taken. In fact, he'll be
here any minute. He has his own
car.

RICK
Good for him.

ISABEL
He has a job.

RICK
Good for him.

ISABEL

No. Good for me. Now, I can get my hair and nails done anytime I want.

RONNY

Good luck with that.

Rick and Ronny rush toward Carlito's house.

ISABEL

Hey, I wasn't done talking! Get back here!

EXT. CARLITO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Rick and Ronny KNOCK on the front door. No reply. Minutes pass.

RONNY

Think the Martians got him?

RICK

Nah. They're probably friends.

RONNY

Yeah. He probably called them down here in the first place.

Their knocks convert to POUNDING. After losing patience, they decide to enter.

INT. CARLITO'S HOUSE - CARLITO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rick and Ronny barge in. Carlito plays a first-person shooting game on his console. The television speakers are turned all the way up, generating GUNFIRE and EXPLOSIONS.

RICK

We need your help, Carlito!

Carlito gives them a quick glance, then returns to the screen as if his character's life depended on it.

CARLITO

I'm busy! What do you pendejos want?!

Rick grabs the TV remote and lowers the volume.

RICK

Explain what happened last night.

CARLITO
You mean, the UFO?

RICK
Yeah.

CARLITO
I know what this is about! You think I called those aliens down here! Don't you?! I get it! I'm a geek! But I'm not stupid!

RICK
We didn't think that, at all.

CARLITO
Get outta my house! I've never been so insulted in my entire life!

Rick and Ronny are beside themselves, speechless.

CARLITO
Ha! I'm just messin' with ya, homies! You should've seen your faces.
(a beat)
Okay. You want my professional opinion on the UFO? It was a hoax.

RICK
A hoax?

CARLITO
Yeah.

RICK
How do you know?

CARLITO
Listen to me, homie. I analyzed the footage they've been showing all morning. It's a fake. Trust me. I'm an expert on these things.

RICK
So, it was some kinda prank?

CARLITO
Not exactly. What happened last night is something that, we conspiracy theorists, like to call... a government snow job. It's your basic cover-up.

It happens quite often, but never at this magnitude. It's definitely bigger than normal.

RONNY

That's what Rick's mom said.

Rick punches Ronny's arm.

RONNY

(rubbing his arm)

Well, she kinda said it. In a roundabout way.

Rick punches his arm again -- same spot.

RONNY

Stop hitting me!

RICK

Next time, it's your face!

Rick turns his attention to Carlito.

RICK

Why would the government go through all that trouble of staging a UFO sighting?

CARLITO

Why else? To divert our attention from something larger. Kinda, like, the chupacabra.

RICK

The what?

CARLITO

The chupacabra. A few months ago, some officials in Puerto Rico fabricated a story about a creature that started killing animals. Now, they have something to blame when people start, you know... dying.

RONNY

That doesn't make me feel any better.

CARLITO

Don't worry, homie. I'm sure, whatever they're planning, it'll blow over.

RICK
How can you be so sure?

CARLITO
Listen. Have you tried leaving town, yet?

RICK
No.

CARLITO
Start there.

RICK
Come with us. You know what to look for.

CARLITO
No way! I'm the farthest I've ever been on Moon Mountain Snipers!

RICK
Just pause it.

CARLITO
No! I've been playing all night! I don't wanna lose my momentum!

Carlito's concentration on the game grows more intense.

CARLITO
If you can leave town, then it's just a simple exercise and they'll be out of our hair in no time.

RICK
And if we can't?

CARLITO
Then it's an isolated operation.

RONNY
What's that mean?

CARLITO
Before we know it, the entire town will be on lockdown. No electricity. No television. No phones. We'll be completely cut off from the outside world.

RONNY
That would mean no more video games. Right?

Ronny's comment strikes a nerve with Carlito.

CARLITO
That would really suck.
(pausing game)
All right. I'm coming with you.

EXT. RICK'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

For the first time, Rick and Ronny notice Jerry's car still parked in front of the house.

They approach the seemingly abandoned car.

RICK
Jerry never left.

RONNY
How did we miss that?

SUDDENLY --

a hand SLAMS against the car door window from inside. They all jump back. GROANS come from inside the car. A head slowly rises. It's Jerry. He opens his car door and staggers out. During a long drawn out yawn, Jerry reaches down his pants to scratch his balls. He doesn't realize that Rick and the others are staring.

JERRY
(yanking out hand)
Ope! Didn't know I had company.

Jerry massages his temples.

JERRY
I got the worst hangover right now.
(directed toward Carlito)
Hey, you're Mexican. Right? I heard menudo's good for this sort of thing. You wouldn't happen to have any leftovers, would ya?

CARLITO
I'm not Mexican, pendejo. I'm Puerto Rican.

JERRY
Puerto Rican?

CARLITO
Yeah.

JERRY
What's the difference?

CARLITO
We make better rice.

JERRY
Rice?

CARLITO
Yep.

JERRY
Well, that's probably why I can't
tell a difference. I don't even
like rice.

RICK
Sorry, Jerry. We can't really talk
right now. We're in a bit of a
hurry.

JERRY
Hey, wait a sec. You got the time?

CARLITO
(glancing at wristwatch)
It's 1:30.

JERRY
Shit. Regina's gonna be pissed.

RICK
I thought you guys got a divorce.

JERRY
We did. But every now and then, she
wants me to give her beaver some
wood. You know what I'm sayin'?

RONNY
But she hates your guts.

Jerry jumps into his car. Starts it. The loud exhaust drowns
his voice...

JERRY
She hates my guts, all right! But
she wants me in her guts just the
same! Hell, I let her put a paper
bag over my head!

He gives a slight wave goodbye. SLAMS the door. Speeds away.

INT. RICK'S MINIVAN - LATER

Rick drives. Ronny is in the passenger seat. Carlito sits in the middle section, nodding to sleep.

RONNY
(smacking his forehead)
Dammit! I knew I forgot sumthin'.

RICK
What?

RONNY
Hold on! Pull over!

RICK
Why?

RONNY
Stop the van, Rick!

Rick slams on his brakes. The tires SCREECH. Carlito jolts from his sleep.

RICK
What's going on?

RONNY
Your mom doesn't want you taking
the van --

RICK
(interrupting)
I'll fill it up when we get back!
Enough about the gas already!

RONNY
I'm sorry. It's just... I gave your
mom my word.

CARLITO
Hey, homie. You shouldn't make
promises you can't keep.

Rick steps on it. They head toward the edge of town. They notice SOLDIERS and MILITARY VEHICLES swarming the local MALL and the HOSPITAL.

RONNY
I don't like the look of this,
guys. We should head home. What do
you think, Carlito?

Rick and Ronny hear SNORES. Carlito is fast asleep.

RONNY
 Carlito, wake up! You're supposed
 to be our eyes and ears!

Carlito opens one eye.

CARLITO
 I'm up.

They approach the tail end of bumper-to-bumper traffic. The ELDERLY make up most of it.

EXT. ROADBLOCK - SAME

MILITARY VEHICLES are situated to act as barriers. Armed SOLDIERS stand at their post.

A large truck (MOBILE COMMAND CENTER) leads a convoy of military vehicles into town, maneuvering past the barriers.

A special CARGO TRUCK is centered within the convoy.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - SAME

General Booth, now in his 60's, hasn't changed much besides the grayish hair and extra wrinkles. A fat stogie juts from the side of his mouth. He sits in the passenger seat.

MIGHTY RUFUS (30's), an enormous muscular soldier, steers the command center. This is the general's right-hand man.

Just as the mobile command center passes Rick's minivan, the general meets eyes with Rick and Ronny.

INT. RICK'S MINIVAN - SAME

Carlito stares awkwardly at the general as if he recognizes him. He rubs his sleepy eyes to get a better look.

RONNY
 Hey, was that Tom Selleck?

RICK
 (competing)
 Nah. That was Freddie Mercury.

RONNY
 Burt Reynolds.

RICK
 Frank Zappa.

CARLITO
That was Super Mario.

IN PANTOMIME, armed SOLDIERS redirect traffic, ordering them to turn back around.

RONNY
Let's try another way.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- Rick's minivan approaches the second roadblock.

-- the third roadblock.

-- the fourth.

-- fifth.

INT. RICK'S MINIVAN - SAME

Rick brings the minivan to a halt near an open field. He runs frustrated fingers through his hair.

RICK
We're not leaving.

RONNY
We could cut through a field...

As if on cue, a military helicopter maneuvers across the sky.

RONNY
...Or not.

CARLITO
Let's head home. I need to look something up on the net.

RONNY
On the what?

CARLITO
The world wide web.

RONNY
World wide what?

CARLITO
Just get me home. I'll explain later. I know I've seen that guy before. And I think I know where.

Rick floors it.

EXT. RICK'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

Rick and Ronny stand outside the minivan. Carlito is in a rush to leave them.

CARLITO

Once I find out what's going on,
I'll let you guys know! Don't do
anything without me!

Carlito runs across the street to his home.

RONNY

We forgot to get gas. Your mom's
gonna kill me.

Isabel sits on her porch steps, looking utterly glum. There's no sign of her "new" man. She sees Rick and primps her hair. Squirts herself with perfume. Walks across the street, flaunting her sexuality.

ISABEL

Looks like I got stood up.

RICK

Sorry to hear that.

ISABEL

His loss. Anyway, I just wanted to
let you know that I'm back on the
market. If you ask me out, I'll say
yes.

RONNY

Don't do it.

ISABEL

He doesn't need anyone telling him
what to do.

RONNY

You mean, like you?

ISABEL

That's different. He does things
for me, 'cause he cares about me.
But you wouldn't know anything
about that, since nobody cares
about you.

RONNY

Oh, I see. That's how you wanna play. All right. Let's bring out the big guns.

Isabel holds a smug smile, awaiting his comeback.

RONNY

Hey, Rick, you gonna tell her about Gertrude? Or am I?

RICK

Gertrude?

ISABEL

Gertrude?! I'm being passed up for a skank?

RICK

We're not together. I swear.

RONNY

Ask him to get his favorite shirt. It has Gertrude's perfume all over it. We all know how that happened.

Ronny humps the air.

ISABEL

Eww, yuck. I can't have Gertrude's sloppy seconds. No way.

She rushes back to her house.

RICK

(turns to Ronny)

What the hell did you just do?!

RONNY

I just saved you. You're welcome.

RICK

I was holdin' aces! You blew it!

RONNY

Isabel wants her slave back!

RICK

Screw you, Ronald!

RONNY

Screw you, Richard!

RICK
 (gains some composure)
 Just go. I don't even wanna look at
 you right now.

RONNY
 You're gonna let a chick get in the
 way of our friendship? I've known
 you since the fourth grade. We had
 our first boners together --

RICK
 (interrupting)
 Why are you still talking?

RONNY
 Okay. Fine. Go back to your
 precious Isabel. I'm not doing you
 any more favors. And you know what
 else?
 (a beat)
 I'm gettin' a slushy. Without you.

Ronny sullenly walks away. Rick is torn between Isabel's
 front door and chasing after his best friend.

After Ronny is out of sight, a SPORTS CAR pulls up to Rick --
 it's Deuce and his two buddies.

DEUCE
 Told you it wasn't over, dweeb.

RICK
 Shit.

Deuce and his buddies climb out of the car. They're wearing
 their football jerseys with their nicknames displayed on the
 back: "DEUCE", "SCARECROW", and "TIN MAN".

They take hold of Rick and shove him against the car.
 Scarecrow and Tin Man hold Rick's arms. Deuce draws back his
 fist --

MR. PARKER (O.S.)
 -- The news this morning says we
 might have aliens in our town!

MR. PARKER (80's), wearing thick eyeglasses and overalls,
 stands on the edge of his front porch holding a double-
 barreled shotgun. It's pointed at Deuce.

MR. PARKER
 They don't seem very friendly!

DEUCE
We're not aliens, old man!

MR. PARKER
I don't hear so good! Speak up,
space invader!

Deuce and his buddies release their grip. Rick makes his way over to Mr. Parker.

EXT. MR. PARKER'S PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Rick steps up on the porch.

MR. PARKER
Hello there, Ricky.

RICK
Hi, Mr. Parker.

Rick and Mr. Parker watch as Deuce and his buddies climb back into their vehicle.

DEUCE
Your luck's running out, punk!

Deuce floors it. The car SQUEALS away, leaving behind a cloud of smoke.

RICK
You just saved my life. Thanks.

MR. PARKER
Wunt nuthin'.
(a beat)
Hey, now that you're over here, you
wanna see something strange? It'll
only take a few minutes.

RICK
Sure.

EXT. MR. PARKER'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Parker leads Rick to a large chicken coop -- it's empty. The wires are mangled on one side.

MR. PARKER
Something ate all my chickens. You
think it was them aliens?

RICK
Aliens don't exist, Mr. Parker.

MR. PARKER
Tell that to my chickens.

SUDDENLY --

an OVER-SIZED rat leaps out of a bush. Lands on Mr. Parker's chest, causing him to drop his shotgun. It bites his throat. Mr. Parker drops to his knees. Keels over dead.

RICK
Shit!

Rick meets eyes with the rat. It SNARLS ferociously.

WITHOUT WARNING --

the rat lunges at him. Rick avoids the attack, and then darts toward his house with the rat nipping at his heels.

Rick leaps up

ON HIS FRONT PORCH

where Officer Long and Officer Hardy happen to be standing, saying their goodbyes to Claire. Rick shoves the police officers aside.

OFFICER LONG
Hey! Watch it, kid!

Rick pushes his mom inside the house. SLAMS the door. The deadbolt CLICKS.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Claire, hands on hips, is appalled by her son's actions.

CLAIRE
What the hell was that, young man?!

RICK
I was being chased by a rat!

CLAIRE
Have you lost your mind?

RICK
A big-ass rat killed Mr. Parker!

CLAIRE

Are you doing drugs with your
sister?

RICK

You gotta believe me!

CLAIRE

I think you should go lie down. You
look a little flush, dear.

RICK

Are you hearing me?!

A YOUNG LADY (20's), pretty and petite, saunters into the living room dressed in pajamas and hemp sandals. She rubs her sleepy eyes. This is Rick's sister, Abigail, who we now see.

ABIGAIL

What are you guys doin' up so
early?

CLAIRE

Honey, it's two o'clock in the
afternoon.

Rick needs his mother and sister to see what's transpiring outside. He unlocks the front door. Opens it wide enough for them to look out. The officers struggle with an enormous rat, their faces and hands are covered in blood.

Claire and Abigail SCREAM. The rat lunges at them just as Rick SLAMS the door in its face. They hear the impact. THUD!

RICK

Do you believe me now?!

UNEXPECTEDLY --

they hear GUNFIRE. The last bullet SHATTERS the large front window. Rick, Claire, and Abigail hit the floor.

The rat leaps inside through the broken window and SNARLS.

Rick grabs his mother's arm and hauls her toward his bedroom. Abigail trails behind. The rat gains on them. They enter

RICK'S BEDROOM

and SLAM the door. Rick glances around for something he can use to kill the rat. He sees the broken bedpost with nails. He grabs it, wielding it like a bat.

RICK
 (to Abigail)
 When I say open the door, open the
 door! Okay?!

Jumping the gun, Abigail opens the door. The rat soars through the air. Rick dodges the overgrown rodent, which lands on his bed.

RICK
 I didn't say open the door!

ABIGAIL
 You said open the door!

RICK
 I said when I say open the door,
 open the door!

ABIGAIL
 Mom, who do you believe?! Him? Or
 me?!

CLAIRE
 Quit fighting!

The rat begins HUMPING Rick's body pillow.

RICK
 Are you kiddin' me?

The rat SNARLS. Shreds the pillow. Charges at Rick, who swings the leg post, impaling the rat. Blood splatters on Abigail's face. Rick swings his makeshift weapon, trying to get the rat off. It detaches. SMACKS Abigail in the face.

ABIGAIL
 Ewww!

She begins spitting on Rick's floor.

RICK
 Stop spitting on my floor! Mom,
 tell her to quit spitting on my
 floor!

ABIGAIL
 Mom, can you deal with your crazy
 son? He's worried about stupid
 shit. A rat was just in my mouth --

-- the thought of her own statement causes her to begin dry heaving.

RICK
Seriously, Abby?

ABIGAIL
Like, I can help it! Leave me
alone, you jerk!

CLAIRE
Stop fighting! Obviously, we have
other things to worry about!

EXT. RICK'S FRONT PORCH - LATER

Rick slowly peeks his head out the front door. He sees
Officer Hardy lying motionless.

Rick steps out with the bedpost readily in hand. Claire and
Abigail walk warily behind him.

Officer Long is bent on one knee. Claire looks down at the
other officer.

CLAIRE
(cupping mouth)
Oh, my... Is he -- ?

Officer Long glances at his partner. Before he has a chance
to check if he's alive, a giant rat leaps across the porch.

Claire and Abigail SCREAM.

Officer Long throws up his arm to deflect the attack. The rat
chomps down on his forearm, causing him to drop his gun.

Rick throws down his bedpost weapon. Picks up the officer's
gun. Takes aim. Fires. The rat's head explodes into pieces.
BLAM! Blood splatters on Abigail's face.

ABIGAIL
You know I have a weak stomach!

She begins spitting on the porch.

RICK
Yeah, like, I meant to do that!

Abigail begins dry heaving.

CLAIRE
Pull yourself together, dear.

ABIGAIL

Easy for you to say, Mom. You don't have blood in your mouth.

CLAIRE

I've had worse in my mouth.

Abigail pukes over the side of the porch.

Officer Long kneels beside his partner. Checks for a pulse.

OFFICER LONG

(into his radio)

Officer down! Officer down! I'm at 1840 Main Street! Requesting an ambulance!

No reply. He radios again. Still, no reply.

OFFICER LONG

I gotta get him to the hospital.

Officer Long weakly and desperately tries to scoop his partner up. Rick hands the gun off to Abigail and aids the officer. They haul his partner to the squad car. Place him in the backseat.

OFFICER LONG

I need to find out what's going on. You folks stay inside your home.

He climbs in the squad car and speeds away.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Rick deadbolts the front door. Abigail continues to hold the officer's gun. She tries to hand it off.

ABIGAIL

That cop forgot his gun. Here, somebody. Take it. You know how I feel about these things.

Rick snatches the gun away.

RICK

The whole world knows how you feel about guns, Abby. You don't have to make a big production about it.

ABIGAIL

I'm not.

Claire glances at her broken window. Begins sobbing. Rick offers a comforting embrace.

CLAIRE

I don't believe what just happened.
Those poor strippers were so nice
to me.

RICK

Uhh, they weren't strippers, Mom.
Those were real cops.

Claire pulls herself away from Rick.

CLAIRE

You mean to tell me... you forgot
my birthday?

RICK

I'm sorry.

ABIGAIL

Happy birthday, Mom.

CLAIRE

Well, there's nothing happy about
it now. Thanks for nothing. I'm so
embarrassed.

RICK

Strippers would be the last thing
I'd get for your birthday.

ABIGAIL

Ditto.

CLAIRE

You guys suck.

INT. ISABEL'S HOUSE - CARLITO'S BEDROOM - SAME

Carlito sits at his desk, dabbing away on his computer keyboard. Browses through a certain website.

THE MONITOR, displays the title of the webpage: "WORLD SHOCKER NEWS - PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE". There are posted PHOTOS OF UFOs, CROP CIRCLES, DRAWINGS OF SPACE ALIENS.

He scrolls down. An old PHOTOGRAPH grabs his attention. It's a headshot of General Booth.

CARLITO

Super Mario.

The photo corresponds with the article: "PANDORA'S BOX".

He scrolls further down. Certain words catch his eye:
CENTRALIA, PENNSYLVANIA. 1962. FOOD OF THE GODS? RATS.
WILDFIRE.

The article ends with a CLOSE UP of another photo. It depicts
General Booth standing next to a mechanical contraption:
"PANDORA'S BOX". It's uniquely-shaped. A winding crank
protrudes from one of its sides, like a jack-in-the-box.

He highlights the page and prints it.

As the page prints, Carlito continues scrolling. Other words
begin to catch his eye: DEAD WALK THE EARTH. GIANTS ATTACK.

SUDDENLY --

the power is cut. His computer dies. He looks over at his
television and watches his paused game disappear into
oblivion.

CARLITO
Nooooooooo! My game!

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

No power. Sunlight illuminates the inside of the store.

Ronny stands at the slushy machine. His cup barely has any
slush. Swallows what little he has. Throws the cup away.

There's no one in sight but him. He approaches the front
counter.

RONNY
Hello?

Silence.

RONNY
Is anyone here?

An indistinct NOISE comes from the refrigerated beer storage
area.

RONNY
Hello? Is someone there?

Ronny notices the call bell on the counter with a small note
that reads: "Please Ring Bell For Assistance." He rings it --
DING!

RONNY

Hello!

A minute passes. He rings the bell again. This time, the DING of the bell corresponds with the door to the beer storage bursting open.

An OVER-SIZED rat leaps out. Lets out a long drawn-out BURP. It staggers with each step, knocking over items from the shelves. It's noticeably drunk.

Ronny YELLS and darts for the door.

EXT. CONVIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Ronny bursts out the front entrance. He SLAMS the door behind him, trapping the rat inside. The door reverberates with its weak attempts to break through the glass. It lets out another long BURP. Collapses. SNORES.

Ronny backs away from the door. Bolts.

EXT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ENTRANCE - SAME

Officer Long drives up to a military vehicle parked near the entrance. He jumps out of his squad car.

A SOLDIER climbs out of the military truck.

OFFICER LONG

We were attacked! I don't know what they were! They looked like big mutant rats!

SOLDIER #2

Were you bit?

OFFICER LONG

I'll be okay! My partner needs a doctor! He's barely breathing!

Officer Long leads the soldier to the squad car. Opens the back door.

The soldier peers inside. Removes a gun from their holster. Shoots Officer Hardy in the head. BLAM!

Officer Long cannot believe his eyes. He quickly reaches for his gun, but his holster is empty. Before he has a chance to retaliate in another way, the soldier shoots him -- it's a headshot. BLAM! Officer Long drops to the ground.

A second SOLDIER approaches the squad car. Yanks out Officer Hardy. Piles the bodies. Aims his flamethrower. Torches them.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME

Rick, Claire, and Abigail sit on the couch.

SUDDENLY --

an alarming KNOCK on the door startles them. Rick jumps up. Peers out the broken window. Watches Ronny pick up the bedpost weapon in a defending manner.

RICK

Ronny?

RONNY

I know you're not gonna believe what just happened to me.

Ronny doesn't have time for Rick to unlock the front door -- he climbs in through the broken window, almost falling.

RICK

We know.

RONNY

Screw those roadblocks! We gotta get outta town!

SUDDENLY --

there's another alarming KNOCK on the front door. Carlito peeks his head through the broken window.

CARLITO

Hey, homies.

LATER

Rick and the others gather around Carlito, hanging on his every word. The printed page of General Booth and Pandora's Box gets passed around.

CARLITO

...General Booth was in charge of testing out a new bio-weapon. They called it Pandora's Box. The first test was done in Centralia, Pennsylvania. It created giant rats like the ones you saw today. This town was plagued with these things. There was no way to control them.

The army had to set the whole town on fire.

(a beat)

That guy we saw today... Super Mario. It's him. General Booth. I have a feeling he's testing it out again. And another thing. The rats are the tip of the iceberg of what's coming.

RICK

What do you mean?

CARLITO

Well, I didn't get a chance to read the entire article before the power went out, but there was something about the dead coming back to life and...

RONNY

You mean, like zombies?

Carlito nods.

RICK

Sounds like we're gonna need some guns. Lots of 'em.

RONNY

The hardware store.

CLAIRE

Uhh, we are not leaving. That officer told us to stay put, so that's what we're doing.

ABIGAIL

I'm with mom.

RICK

You saw what those things can do. Imagine more of them. We can't stay here. We'll die.

CARLITO

He's right. We can't stay here. Our best chance is at the hardware store. If we can get there.

Claire takes a moment to think it through.

CLAIRE

All right. But I can't go out there looking like this. I'm not even dressed. I don't have makeup.

ABIGAIL

You might want to do something about that hair, too.

RICK

This isn't some blind date! We need to get outta here!

CLAIRE

Don't rush me! At least, let me pick out a pair of shoes! I'm not leaving with bare feet!

RICK

Put on slippers!

Rick finds a pair of pink bunny slippers. Tosses them to Claire.

ABIGAIL

Hey, those are mine!

RICK

(to Abigail)

Eat a penis burger and choke.

ABIGAIL

Mom? Did you hear what he just said to me?

CLAIRE

Abby, you're so much prettier when you don't talk.

Abigail angrily crosses her arms. Pouts.

LATER

SOMEONE scouts the

DOWNTOWN AREA

through crosshairs of a rifle scope. The view appears to be from a building rooftop. The scope pans over to Rick's minivan in motion. It slows to a complete stop.

INT. RICK'S MINIVAN - SAME

Rick is behind the wheel. The gas meter reads: "E".

CLAIRE
Why are we stopping?

RICK
It's Abby's fault!

CLAIRE
You gotta be kiddin' me. Are we
outta gas?!

Ronny drops his head.

RONNY
I'm sorry, Ms. Miller.

CLAIRE
Ronald, it's okay. Don't blame
yourself. My kids are hardheaded.
(a beat)
Well, what now?

RICK
We're not far from the hardware
store. We can walk it.

ABIGAIL
Great plan.

RICK
Nobody asked you!

CLAIRE
For Pete's sake, stop it! Right
now! No more fighting!

IN RIFLE SCOPE VIEW --

the mystery figure continues to watch the minivan. Rick and the others climb out. Head toward an alley.

EXT. ALLEY - SAME

Rick and the others stay low and keep leery of their surroundings. Carlito, Claire, and Abigail are armed with kitchen items: a butcher knife, a cooking pan, and a rolling pin.

They hear a GROAN coming from somewhere behind them.

ABIGAIL
Uhh, what was that?

From behind a building, a ZOMBIE emerges. Not just any zombie. This walking corpse is Mr. Parker.

RICK
Mr. Parker?

Mr. Parker lurches toward them. His mouth writhing.

Everyone bolts down the alley. Everyone except Ronny, who freezes with fear.

RONNY
Oh, man. Nuh-uh. Oh, man. It's a real-life zombie. Oh, boy. Nope, nope, nope...

He drops his bedpost weapon. Takes a seat in the middle of the alley. Rick looks back to see his best friend about to become a zombie snack.

RICK
What are you doing?

RONNY
(shaking head)
I don't know if I can do this. I don't think I can do this. I can't do this, Rick. I mean, look! We got rats! We got zombies! What's next?!

RICK
Get up!

Rick tugs on Ronny's arm.

RONNY
Five minutes ago, I was all badass Joe Pesci. But I don't wanna die.

Mr. Parker closes in. His arms outstretched. Rick hesitantly aims the officer's gun.

RICK
Sorry, Mr. Parker.

A GUNSHOT rings off. BLAM! Mr. Parker's head explodes. Rick looks at his gun, confused.

GERTRUDE (OS)
Hey, fellas.

Rick turns his head. Gertrude stands behind him, holding a rifle with a scope.

RICK
Gertrude?

GERTRUDE
How many times do I have to save
your ass?

RICK
I owe ya one.

GERTRUDE
Two.

RICK
Right.

GERTRUDE
My grandma said you might be
stopping by. Good thing I kept an
eye out for ya.

RICK
Who taught you how to shoot?

GERTRUDE
My grandpa.

She makes the sign of the cross, indicating his passing.

GERTRUDE
We'll chat later. C'mon.

She waves the rest of the group to follow her. Ronny grabs his bedpost weapon. Uses it to pull himself up.

RONNY
Thanks for coming back to get me,
Rick.

RICK
Why wouldn't I?

RONNY
Because I screwed things up between
you and Isabel.

RICK
Things were already screwed up. I
just couldn't see it.

RONNY

Girls have a funny way of blinding
us with this...

Ronny makes the shape of a "VAGINA" with his fingers.

Rick and Ronny catch up with Claire, who lags behind the others. Her slippers keep flying off.

CLAIRE

I can't run with these stupid
things!

The alley comes to an end, intersecting with a street. The hardware store is directly in front of them.

Cuckoos cluster the area.

CLAIRE

Oh, no!

GERTRUDE

Don't worry. They're not what you
think.

CLAIRE

Then what are they?

GERTRUDE

I'm not sure, exactly. All I know
is they're a bit cuckoo, so that's
what I've been calling them.

The group follows Gertrude across the street.

POV SHOTS:

RICK SEES -- a MIDDLE-AGED MAN holding an imaginary steering wheel, turning it one way but walking in the opposite.

CLAIRE SEES -- a TEENAGE GIRL, in sweats, trying to jog, her nose bleeds from continuously slamming into the utility pole in front of her.

ABIGAIL SEES -- a HANDSOME GUY staggering around, wearing nothing but his underwear. WE HEAR something like: "Sexual Healing" by Marvin Gaye.

As she passes the handsome guy, Abigail takes notice of his shit stain.

END MUSIC WITH A RECORD SCRATCH

CARLITO SEES -- a TEENAGER trying to ride a bicycle backward.

RONNY SEES -- an OBESE WOMAN dressed in a nightgown two sizes too small. Her booty wobbles back and forth with each step. WE HEAR something like: "Hoochie Mama" by 2 Live Crew.

RONNY (O.S.)
That's way too much ham for me.

END MUSIC

EXT. IVAN'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - SAME

Ivan stuffs a wad of snuff in his mouth.

IVAN
Russian nail gun! Test number one!

He lifts a modified NAIL GUN. Aims it at his roof. Pulls the trigger. BLASTS the hell out of his shingles.

SUDDENLY --

the ground RUMBLES beneath him. He releases the trigger. A thunderous NOISE comes from the wooded area near his house.

Ivan spits out his wad.

IVAN
What in the world is that?

His answer comes: a barrage of OVER-SIZED rats begin to pour out. They stampede toward him.

IVAN
(gasps)
Mother Russia. Grandfather was
telling the truth.

Ivan aims his nail gun at the giant rodents. Begins firing. Blood and guts splatter in all directions. It's useless -- there's too many rats.

Ivan makes a beeline for his truck, still firing off his nail gun. He jumps inside his truck. Hauls ass without a second to lose, tires kicking up dust.

A rat manages to leap inside the truck bed before Ivan can gain enough distance to get away. The rat knocks over a box of RUSSIAN FIRECRACKERS (PIPE BOMBS). They roll across the truck bed.

INT. IVAN'S TRUCK - SAME

The rat SMASHES through the back windshield. Bites Ivan's arm. Ivan surges with instant rage. Puts the rat in a headlock.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Ivan's truck fishtails through town. Turns hard rights. Hard lefts. He swerves to miss a cluster of cuckoos and continues onward.

INT. IVAN'S TRUCK - SAME

The nail gun slides off the seat. It's out of reach. The rat attempts to bite him, snapping at air. Ivan uses his foot to scoot the nail gun closer. Draws it up with his foot.

He grabs the nail gun -- the steering wheel goes rogue.

Ivan spins the nail gun around. Aims underneath the rat's chin. Pulls the trigger. Nails tear into the rat's head, impaling it to the roof of the truck.

Ivan laughs as if his pain somehow dissipated. His amusement is cut short --

SMASH!

Ivan CRASHES into a utility pole. The impact shatters the windshield and cracks the radiator, rendering his truck useless. He climbs out, holding his nail gun. He shows uncertainty of his whereabouts. He reaches in the truck bed. His box of Russian firecrackers is empty.

The thunderous RUMBLE of stampeding rats is heard, drawing closer and closer...

The firecrackers are scattered and out of reach. There's no time to gather them. He hurriedly limps away.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - SAME

Rick, Ronny, and Carlito watch as Gertrude transfers the guns from the display wall over to the counter.

RICK
(to Carlito)
Ever shoot a gun?

CARLITO
Just on video games.

Rick takes up a pistol.

RICK
Nuthin' to it.
(points at trigger)
Just think of this as the action
button. Aim. Action button. Got it?

CARLITO
Got it.

Ronny loads two revolvers. Holds them up. Points at nothing.

RONNY
(with Joe Pesci voice)
No more shines, Billy. Maybe, you
didn't hear. You've been gone for a
while. I don't shine shoes anymore.

Claire grabs a dinky pistol, expresses satisfaction.

Ms. Cartwright and Abigail keep their distance from the heap
of guns. They refuse to arm themselves.

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - LUMBERYARD - LATER

Ronny and Carlito gather lumber. Haul it inside the store to
bar the windows and doors.

Rick, with a stack of boards in his arms, glances at a TARPED
VEHICLE. A bit curious, he stops.

Gertrude notes his curiosity. She pulls the tarp off,
revealing a black 1969 Dodge Charger in excellent condition.

GERTRUDE
1969 Dodge Charger. Completely
restored. It was my grandpa's. We
used to work on it together when I
was younger. He left it to me. I
can't bring myself to drive it,
yet.

(a beat)
I keep the key in my pocket,
though. I guess, it's my way of
keeping him close. Ya know?

Gertrude's mind seems to drift away.

RICK
Sorry about your grandpa.

GERTRUDE
Me, too.

Rick offers a look of sympathy. He heads toward the back entrance and holds the door open for her.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Rick and Gertrude carry lumber to the front of the store. Ronny and Carlito are in the process of boarding up the windows.

CARLITO
Wait. I just thought of something.
Hey, Ms. Cartwright?!

Ms. Cartwright sits on a chair, looking down at her hands.

MS. CARTWRIGHT
(looking up)
Yes?

CARLITO
What aisle is your rat repellent?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
Aisle ten, dear. Far left side.

Carlito makes his way toward the far aisle.

Ms. Cartwright appears to be bothered by something. She glances at her hands. They're swollen.

Gertrude notices her grandmother's look of concern.

GERTRUDE
Grandma, you okay?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
Yes, dear. I'm fine.

Gertrude glances at her grandmother's hands. Her eyes widen with shock.

GERTRUDE
Grandma! This isn't *fine*!

MS. CARTWRIGHT
It's just my arthritis flaring up again. It's nothing.

GERTRUDE

I've never seen them get like this.
Did you take your pills?

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Yes, I took them. I said I'll be
fine.

GERTRUDE

Are you sure?

MS. CARTWRIGHT

Will you stop worrying so much?
Just let my meds do their thing.

GERTRUDE

Okay.

Still showing hesitation, Gertrude steps away to continue her work.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - SAME

General Booth keeps a watchful eye on a certain monitor. It shows the inside of a large containment unit with a bulk of OVER-SIZED WHITE RATS climbing over each other.

GENERAL BOOTH

It's almost meal time for my
babies. They're getting restless.

Mighty Rufus heavily butters a slice of toast. Adds a wallop of strawberry jam and smears it over the butter. Hands the toast to the general.

Keeping his gaze on the monitor, the general is precise on how he eats his toast. As he approaches his last bite, he laps up the butter and jam like a dog.

GENERAL BOOTH

Be patient. I have something very
special for you. Your first taste
of fresh... meat.

He tosses the remainder of the toast in his mouth. CLOSE IN, on his teeth daubed with bread crumbs and reddish jam while he chews erratically.

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - ROOFTOP - LATER

Rick and Gertrude glance over the edge of the building, scoping out the area. They watch Ronny and Carlito apply powdered rat repellent around the building.

Gertrude steals glances at Rick whenever he looks away. She appears to have remembered something. She digs into her pocket. Pulls out a folded piece of paper. Holds it out.

GERTRUDE

You left this. In the boiler room.

Rick takes it. Unfolds it. It's the drawing he did during chemistry. He glances it over. Stuffs it away in his pocket.

RICK

Thanks.

Rick grins slightly. Gertrude notices.

GERTRUDE

Oh-no.

RICK

What?

GERTRUDE

You almost smiled. Now, I know the world is about to end.

RICK

I smile.

GERTRUDE

Oh, yeah? When?

Rick shrugs.

RICK

When there's sumthin' to smile about.

A long beat.

GERTRUDE

Can I ask you something?

RICK

Sure.

GERTRUDE

You don't have to answer me if you don't want to. It's okay.

RICK
Is it about my dad?

GERTRUDE
No.

RICK
Then ask away.

GERTRUDE
(clears throat)
I know there's a lot of rumors
about me at the school.

RICK
So, what?

GERTRUDE
Do you believe any of them?

RICK
I, uhh, have to come clean.

Gertrude curiously rears back.

RICK
I'm the one who told everybody that
you had... cooties. I was, like,
six at the time. I'm sorry.

Gertrude's look of anger and confusion transforms into one of relief. She playfully slaps his arm.

GERTRUDE
You dick! I thought you were being
serious. I was about to punch you.

RICK
Gertrude, listen. We aren't defined
by what's whispered behind our
backs. At the end of the day, we're
only left with what we know is
true. And the truth is... no one is
perfect. You should only be
concerned by the opinions of those
who deeply care about you.

GERTRUDE
What's your opinion of me?

RICK
It's hard to have an opinion...
when all I have is facts.

MONTAGE - (FLASHBACKS)

-- Gertrude comments on Rick's sketch in the chemistry lab.
Removes paper wads from his hair.

RICK (V.O.)
You're generous and kind...

-- Gertrude sticks up for Rick when confronted by Deuce and his buddies.

RICK (V.O.)
...you put others before
yourself...

-- IN THE BOILER ROOM, near the gas furnace, Rick glances at his crumpled sketch. He shakes his head, despondent. He mouths: "I can't believe she dumped me. I loved her." Gertrude embraces him from the side and gently rubs his back. She mouths: "I'm so sorry."

RICK (V.O.)
...you showed me compassion when
you didn't have to...

-- After Mr. Parker zombie drops, Rick turns around to find Gertrude holding a rifle.

RICK (V.O.)
...you're brave. Braver than me.

END MONTAGE

RICK
Everything you've done today speaks
louder than anything I've ever
heard about you.

GERTRUDE
(teary-eyed)
Thank you.

Rick nods. He leans inward. She raises her lips --

Before their mouths meet for a kiss, the building begins to TREMBLE.

Rick and Gertrude turn their heads and peer in the distance. Their eyes widen in shock. Countless OVER-SIZED rats advance toward them, toppling cuckoos and anything else in their way.

Rick glances over the edge.

RICK
Hey, guys! Get inside! Quick!

Ronny and Carlito catch a glimpse of the approaching danger.

RONNY
Shit!

They dump out the remainder of the rat repellent and enter the building.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - SAME

Ronny and Carlito quickly bar the front door once they enter.

CLAIRE
What's happening out there?

RONNY
We got company!

Stock items begin to RATTLE off the shelves. Claire reaches into her robe pocket. Pulls out her dinky pistol. Cocks the hammer.

EXT. STREET - SAME

Ivan struggles to walk. He sees the hardware store in close proximity.

IVAN
Come on! Get moving! You can make
it! You're Russian! Act like it!
Don't be such a wuss!

INT. HARDWARE STORE - SAME

Rick and Gertrude head down a flight of stairs, joining the others.

RONNY
Is this repellent stuff gonna work?

MS. CARTWRIGHT
Let us hope.

RONNY
Too bad we don't have any Suave
Lady. Where's Isabel when you need
her?

Rick rushes to the front of the store to peek outside. The boards in place limit his view. Through a tiny slit, he sees Ivan stepping around the corner of a building.

RICK
Ivan's out there! We gotta help
him!

Rick doesn't think twice about aiding his friend in need. He quickly unbars the front entrance and rushes outside.

RICK
Cover me!

RONNY
Rick, come back!

There's no coming back. Ronny and Carlito stand outside the door, aiming their guns.

EXT. STREET - SAME

Ivan's steps are pathetic. Rick reaches him just before he collapses in the middle of the street.

RICK
Come on, bud! I gotcha!

Rick tries to lift him -- it's futile.

IVAN
Leave me here, Rick! You're gonna
die! Get outta here!

RICK
I'm not leaving you!

OUT OF NOWHERE --

Julie shows up in the manner of a guardian angel, even appearing to glow a bit. She easily tosses Ivan over her shoulder. They make their way over to the hardware store with the rats drawing closer.

Ivan weakly lifts his nail gun. Pulls the trigger. Nails cut into the wall of rats.

Ronny and Carlito unload their guns into the horde of rats, keeping a section of them at bay.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - SAME

Rick darts inside, waving Julie to hurry up. Julie does her best to squeeze through the door with Ivan.

The GUNFIRE continues until Ronny and Carlito are safely inside. They shut the door and brace it as the rats close in.

Gertrude unpackages a brand new sleeping bag and lays it out. Julie gently lays Ivan on the sleeping bag.

RICK

Someone get me a first aid kit! We need to stop the bleeding!

Gertrude runs off to fetch the medical kit.

The floor TREMBLES violently beneath them.

Ronny peers through a slit to see what's transpiring outside. Several rats stand on their hind end, sniffing the air. It's as if they're unable to penetrate an invisible barrier. The rat repellent is working.

IVAN

First aid kits are for sissies! Don't worry about me!

RICK

You're losing a lot of blood, Ivan.

IVAN

I'll die when I'm good and ready!

Ronny approaches Julie

RONNY

Hey, that's pretty cool what you did back there.

JULIE

Anybody would've done the same.

RONNY

(indicating her arms)
Those guns need registered.

He pokes her bicep.

JULIE

This arm now.

She lets him poke her other bicep.

JULIE

I got other muscles.

RONNY

That's enough poking for one day.

Gertrude rushes back with a first aid kit.

CLAIRE

I'll take it from here.

Claire steps in and begins to bandage him up.

LATER

Ivan, with his wounds dressed, lies on the sleeping bag. His head is propped up, his face expressing pain.

Everyone is gathered around Ivan, listening attentively.

IVAN

(weakened voice)

My grandfather was a Russian spy. He shared many stories with my father, who shared them with me. I didn't believe any of them until today. One story was about a special weapon that created war rats.

CARLITO

Pandora's Box?

IVAN

Yes.

(coughing fit)

They say humans are always six feet away from a rat. Pandora's Box was created with this in mind. Target a city. Let the rats do their thing. Only one problem. No way to control them after the war.

CARLITO

Did your father ever mention the dead coming back to life?

IVAN

Rat saliva reanimates the dead.

CARLITO

Rat saliva?

Carlito glances at Ivan's bandages.

IVAN
Yes, I'm infected. There's no way
around it...

Ivan's voice trails off. He begins coughing up blood.

ABIGAIL
Eww, I'm gonna be sick.

She covers her mouth and runs to the restroom. They can hear
her vomit SPLASHING in the toilet.

IVAN
Listen to me. There are three
phases to Pandora's Box. Rats,
zombies... and giants.

RONNY
Giants?

IVAN
The last phase is temporary. But
they inflict much damage. Bullets
are useless against them.

RICK
How do we stop them?

IVAN
You can only survive them.
(a beat)
Firecrackers might slow them down.

CARLITO
Firecrackers?

RICK
He means explosives.

IVAN
I have some in my truck. I wrecked
on Clinton Street, damn those rats.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - SAME

General Booth continues to glance at the monitors. Mighty
Rufus stands at attention.

GENERAL BOOTH
Round me up some stragglers. No
Pandora's children. They're too
quiet. I enjoy hearing screams.
Understand?

MIGHTY RUFUS

Yes, sir.

GENERAL BOOTH

And no old fogies. I don't wanna run the risk of housing a grower.

MIGHTY RUFUS

Pandora's Box was modified. Growers aren't an issue.

GENERAL BOOTH

Nothing is ever guaranteed, Rufus.

MIGHTY RUFUS

If the elderly is out of the question, finding stragglers is gonna be difficult.

GENERAL BOOTH

You have one hour.

MIGHTY RUFUS

I need more time.

The general produces a unique-looking LIGHTER. Lights a cigar. Blows smoke in Rufus' face.

GENERAL BOOTH

I would hate for you to be the one to suffice my babies.

(warningly)

One hour.

Mighty Rufus salutes the general and exits.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - LATER

Ms. Cartwright glances down at her hands. They've doubled in size. Her mouth quivers. She slumps to the floor. Convulses.

Rick and the others rush to Ms. Cartwright's side.

CLAIRE

She's having a seizure! Hold her head!

Gertrude holds her grandmother's head. After a few minutes, the seizure subsides.

GERTRUDE

Grandma?

Ms. Cartwright is unresponsive. Her breaths are shallow.

CARLITO

What's up with her hands?

CLAIRE

She's beyond our help. She needs a doctor.

RONNY

The hospital is crawling with soldiers.

RICK

What about Regina? She's a nurse. She might be able to help.

CLAIRE

She lives clear on the other side of town. We don't even know if she's alive. You wanna take that risk?

RICK

Ms. Cartwright might die if I don't.

CLAIRE

You might die if you do.

Rick is torn. He sees the desperation in Gertrude's face and the concern of his mother's.

RICK

Sorry, Mom.

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - LATER

The Dodge Charger hauls ass down the street.

INT/EXT. DODGE CHARGER - SAME (DRIVING)

Rick grips the steering wheel, white-knuckled. Ronny sits in the front passenger seat, admiring his revolvers.

An open duffel bag lies between them, overflowing with guns and ammo.

Rats feed on various cuckoos along the street. The rodents look up as the Dodge Charger zooms past them, and then return to their meal.

Rick takes a hard turn around

A BUILDING

causing the tires to SCREECH, which quickly draws the attention of several rats.

Rick glances up at the rear view mirror and notices a few rats in pursuit.

RICK
We're being chased!

RONNY
(holds up revolvers)
Watch me pop a cap in their ass!

RICK
With those little things?

Rick reaches in the duffel bag and pulls out a shotgun.

RICK
(holds out shotgun)
Here! Use this!

RONNY
What's wrong with my taste in guns?

RICK
This isn't the old west.

RONNY
I'm not a cowboy, I'm a goodfella!

Ronny seems torn between his revolvers and the shotgun.

RONNY
What would Joe Pesci do?

RICK
Desperate times call for big guns!
Take the fuckin' shotgun!

RONNY
(showing irritation)
Fine!

Ronny sets his revolvers aside and rudely snatches the shotgun from Rick's hand.

RONNY
(with Joe Pesci's voice)
You wouldn't know a good gun if it
jumped up and shot you in the ass!

Ronny rolls down his window. Climbs halfway out. Pumps the
shotgun. Aims at the rats. Fires. BLAM! A rat loses its face.
Rick sees the kill in the rear view mirror.

RICK
Nice shot!

RONNY
Quit gettin' a hard on!

Another GUNSHOT. BLAM! A rat loses a limb and tumbles off the
street.

The last rat in pursuit leaps on the back of the car. It
lunges at Ronny just as Rick makes a hard turn. The rat flies
off the side of the car. Ronny loses the shotgun while trying
to remain situated.

The rat quickly recovers and continues its chase.

Ronny climbs back in and plops down.

RICK
Where's the shotgun?

RONNY
I dropped it!

RICK
You dropped it?!

RONNY
It was either me lying on the
street, or your stupid shotgun! Get
off my back!

Rick glances at the rear view mirror.

RICK
It's gaining on us!

Ronny draws up his revolvers. Climbs out the window. Fires.
The guns CLICK.

RONNY
I suck.

Ronny scowls and tosses the revolvers inside the car.

RONNY
Quick! Give me another gun!

RICK
You missed?!

RONNY
I'm a horrible shot! What do you
want from me?!

They approach an intersection.

The rat attempts to leap onto the trunk just as they cross the intersection. It's inches from landing when out of nowhere, a sports car comes from the other direction and SMASHES into the rat. The sports car barely evades the back end of the Dodge Charger.

Ronny watches the sports car spin out of control and CRASH. He climbs back in his seat.

RONNY
I think that was Deuce. Should we
go back?

RICK
Hello no!

RONNY
Listen. I know he's a jerk, but I
don't want his death on my
conscience.

RICK
Screw him! I'm not going back!

RONNY
It's the right thing to do.

RICK
You think he'd stop for me?! No
way! Eye for an eye!

Ronny glances at the back window. Rats swarm the sports car.

RONNY
Remember when you invited me to
church?

RICK
What's that got to do with
anything?

RONNY

Your dad preached about how we should turn the other cheek.

RICK

Who cares what he said? He was a fake. His words mean nothing.

RONNY

They weren't his words.
(a beat)
Do it for me. Please.

Rick purses his lips. SLAMS on his brakes. Throws it in reverse and speeds backward. They approach a mound of rats on the wrecked sports car. They hop out of the Dodge Charger with guns drawn. Deuce frantically SCREAMS. He's alone.

The rats are riddled with GUNFIRE. Deuce bolts from his car. He sprints behind Rick and Ronny.

RICK

Where's Scarecrow and Tin Man?

DEUCE

They didn't make it.

Ronny rapidly taps Rick's shoulder.

RONNY

Look!

He points at Ivan's truck. They quickly gather the Russian firecrackers from the truck bed. They rush back to the Dodge Charger. Speed away.

EXT. REGINA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

The Dodge Charger is parked in the driveway next to Jerry's hunk of junk.

Rick and the others warily scout the wooded area that surrounds them.

Deuce stoically approaches Rick. For an uncomfortable minute, there's silence between them. Deuce slowly extends his hand.

DEUCE

Thanks for saving my life.

Rick is hesitant to respond. Shakes his hand. Ronny hands Deuce a pistol.

RONNY

I hope you know how to use this.
Otherwise, you're no good to us.

They approach the front door, weapons ready. Rick lightly KNOCKS on the door. No reply. He quietly opens the door and peeks inside.

RICK

Hello? Regina? Jerry?

It's eerily silent.

INT. REGINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter with caution and eventually make their way to

REGINA'S BEDROOM

where they find adult toys, condom wrappers, and countless empty beer cans. A brown paper sack with eye-holes cut out lies on the bed.

RONNY

It smells like sweaty ass in here.

RICK

It beats rotten cheese.

Ronny scowls and gives him the finger.

Something DISTURBS the silence. A low WHIMPER. It comes from inside the bedroom closet. Rick and the others aim their guns.

RICK

(whispers)

Ronny, get the door.

RONNY

Why do I gotta do it?

They shoot Deuce a look.

DEUCE

Not happening.

RONNY

I swear, if I get bit by a rat, I'm hurtin' somebody.

Ronny cautiously approaches the closet. Reaches for the doorknob. It JIGGLES from inside. Everyone jumps back. The door slowly CREAKS open.

There stands REGINA (40's), unattractive and topless. Her love handles droop over the waistline of her skimpy lingerie briefs. Her mascara has been cried off. She cups her saggy breasts with her hands.

Ronny raises a brow, mesmerized by her nakedness. WE HEAR something like the first line of: "Kiss" by Prince.

END MUSIC

Deuce quickly clears a spot on the bed and places a blanket over Regina's shoulders.

RICK
Regina, what happened?

Deuce coaxes her to the bed.

REGINA
(her voice quivering)
Jerry went to the kitchen. He was grabbing a beer. Something attacked him. I didn't see what it was. I didn't know what else to do, so I hid in the closet.

RICK
It's gonna be okay.

REGINA
What are you doin' here, anyway?

RICK
Someone really needs your help.

Regina gathers an outfit from the floor. They respectfully turn their heads as she gets dressed. Ronny can't help himself. He steals glances at her butt cheeks, dimpled with cellulite.

SUDDENLY --

an indistinct NOISE comes from outside the bedroom, followed by a GROAN. They shoot each other looks.

RONNY
I got the closet. Someone else is gettin' the kitchen.

Rick volunteers by lifting his gun. He steps out of the bedroom and heads toward the kitchen through

A CORRIDOR

with the others tagging behind. They hear another GROAN.

REGINA

Jerry? Is that you?

Rick brings a finger to his lips, shushing her. He peeks around the corner, giving the kitchen a quick glance. Sees nothing. He cautiously enters

THE KITCHEN

with the others peaking over his shoulders. They approach the center island.

SUDDENLY --

Jerry shoots up from behind the center island with a large dead rat hanging from his mouth. The rat has a kitchen knife plunged into it.

REGINA

Jerry! What on earth are you doing?! Are you crazy?!

Jerry tears the rat away and munches on what's left in his mouth. After his gulp, he GROWLS.

Regina SCREAMS.

Jerry throws up his arms and lurches at them.

RICK

Sorry about this, Jerry.

GUNFIRE ensues. Jerry is riddled with bullets. A headshot puts him down. Regina SCREAMS her head off.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - RESTROOM - SAME

Carlito sits on the toilet. A flashlight illuminates the stall. He nods off to sleep. SNORES.

NEAR THE FRONT ENTRANCE

Ivan lies motionless on the sleeping bag.

Gertrude, Claire, Abigail, and Julie are at Ms. Cartwright's side. Her body is entirely swollen. Her clothes are to the point of bursting.

CLAIRE

Where are they? Something's happened to them. I just know it.

Ivan's eyes blink open. His eyes are milky white. He sits up slowly. Claire and the others are unaware.

EXT. HARDWARE STORE - SAME

Heavily armed SOLDIERS scan the streets. They're escorted by several military VEHICLES.

INT./EXT. HARDWARE STORE - SAME

Abigail looks away from Ms. Cartwright for a moment. She notices Ivan struggling to his feet.

ABIGAIL

Ivan?

Abigail makes her way over to him. Ivan lets out a GROAN, which alerts her and the others. Ivan grabs Abigail. She SCREAMS. They fall to the floor.

ABIGAIL

Help!

IN THE RESTROOM

Carlito jolts from his sleep. Drops the flashlight. It rolls away, leaving him in darkness. He hears frantic SCREAMS.

NEAR THE FRONT ENTRANCE

Abigail sees Ivan's dead eyes for the first time. He chomps at the air. She struggles to fend him off.

CLAIRE

Get off my daughter, you pervert!

ABIGAIL

It's not Ivan! It's a zombie!

Claire reaches into her robe pocket. Pulls out her pistol. She nervously fumbles with it, trying to cock the hammer.

The soldiers hear GUNSHOTS coming from inside the hardware store.

Claire unaffectedly shoots Ivan until the gun empties out. Carlito bursts out of the restroom. A strand of toilet paper hangs from his pants. He grabs a pistol from the counter.

ABIGAIL

You have to shoot him in the head!

CLAIRE

Now you tell me!

A GUNSHOT rings out from behind Claire. Ivan's head explodes. His body slumps.

Gertrude stands behind Claire, aiming her rifle. Carlito approaches.

CARLITO

What the heck happened?

GERTRUDE

Ivan turned.

Abigail's face is covered in blood and brain matter. She struggles to climb out from underneath Ivan -- it's futile.

ABIGAIL

Don't just stand there! Get him off me!

Carlito tries to pry the dead body off with no success.

JULIE

Did you forget to eat your Wheaties today?

Julie cracks her knuckles. Removes the dead zombie with ease.

Once Abigail is freed, she begins dry heaving in disgust. She runs to the restroom. Vomits.

They hear a loud ENGINE outside.

CLAIRE

I think they're back.

Gertrude runs to the front entrance and peeks out through a tiny slit. A convoy of military trucks pull up.

GERTRUDE

(running back)
Oh, shit! Not good.

CLAIRE

What's wrong?

Gertrude doesn't have time to explain. She scoops up Ivan's brain matter and runs over to Ms. Cartwright. She smears the blood and brain matter onto her grandmother's face and hair.

ABIGAIL

What are you doing?

Gertrude grabs the sales receipt book from the counter. Scribbles something on it with a nearby pen. Tears off the receipt. Tucks it in her grandmother's armpit.

GERTRUDE

We're being surrounded!

Gertrude grabs a tarp and spreads it over her grandmother just as SOLDIERS begin to burst inside. Red beams seem to weave together from all angles until the lasers find their targets.

Mighty Rufus steps inside. He makes his way over to the counter. Gertrude and the others throw down their weapons in surrender.

MIGHTY RUFUS

(indicating Ivan)

Nice headshot.

He sees the bulged tarp. He signals a soldier to uncover it.

GERTRUDE

Have respect! It's my grandmother!

Gertrude produces tears and sobs uncontrollably in her hands.

The soldier flings back a corner of the tarp, revealing what appears to be another dead body with a headshot. The soldier gives a nod of confirmation -- Gertrude's story checks out. The soldier reapplies the tarp.

MIGHTY RUFUS

Round them up with the others.

LATER - (BLEND SCENES)

The counter has been swiped clean of guns and ammo.

Rick and the others enter the hardware store, trying to make sense of the recent dilapidation.

RONNY

Think those rats did this?

RICK

I dunno.

Rick and Ronny spot Ivan's body. They notice the headshot. They drop their heads, despondent over losing their friend.

Ronny sees the bulged tarp. He uncovers it. Kneels by Ms. Cartwright.

RONNY

I'm sorry, Ms. Cartwright. We tried.

He notices her chest rise. His eyes widen with excitement.

RONNY

She's still alive.

He wipes blood from her face and picks off the brain matter.

RONNY

It's as if she was made to look dead. Like, they camouflaged her, or something.

RICK

They were protecting her.

Rick notices her clothes are torn, unable to contain her swelling body.

REGINA

Let me have a look.

Ronny steps aside. Regina presses an ear against Ms. Cartwright's chest.

REGINA

Her heartbeat is really slow. Too slow to be alive. I don't understand.

RONNY

Is it me, or is she growing?

Regina gets up and slowly backs away, her face expressing fear. They can hear Ms. Cartwright's HEARTBEAT. Thumping louder and louder...

Rick and the others step away as if Ms. Cartwright is a ticking time bomb.

SUDDENLY --

Ms. Cartwright completely bursts out of her clothes. She springs up and GROWLS. She's nude and growing in spurts.

RONNY
What the shit?!

Ms. Cartwright begins to transform into a giant. Ronny aims his revolvers at her.

RICK
No! Don't shoot her!

RONNY
Are you crazy?! She's gonna eat us!

RICK
You don't know that!

RONNY
And you do?!

Giant Ms. Cartwright GROWLS something ferocious. The ceiling is too low, causing her to slouch. She spots Rick and the others staring up at her.

RONNY
Oh, shit.

Giant Ms. Cartwright charges toward the front entrance.

Ronny leaps out of the way just as she SMASHES out of the hardware store, leaving a large gaping hole. Her thunderous FOOTFALLS taper off in the distance.

A sheet of paper flutters to the floor. Rick picks it up. It's Gertrude's note. It reads: "SOLDIERS."

RICK
The general has them. They could be anywhere.

RONNY
Wait a minute. I think I know where they are.

RICK
Where?

RONNY
The high school football field.
(a beat)
You can thank me for getting Saturday school.

Rick spots Ivan's modified nail gun, sticking out from underneath wall rubble. He uncovers it. Blows off the dust.

RICK
General Booth is gonna pay.

INT./EXT. DODGE CHARGER - SUNDOWN (DRIVING)

Rick drives. Headlights off. They approach the

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD

which is brightly lit with stadium lights. The high school building appears to have power.

Rick pulls into the shadow of a small building. They hop out of the car and scope out the military encampment with a pair of hunting binoculars.

IN BINOCULAR VIEW --

Rick sees a small crowd locked up in a large cage. The crowd parts down the middle. He sees Claire, Abigail, Julie, and Carlito. Gertrude is nowhere in sight.

RONNY (O.S.)
Do you see Ms. Daisy?

RICK (O.S.)
(annoyed)
No, I don't see Ms. Daisy.

RONNY (O.S.)
Let me have a look.

RICK (O.S.)
Wait your turn!

Rick pans over to the mobile command center. He watches General Booth and a few SOLDIERS enter.

BACK TO SCENE

Ronny snatches the binoculars away.

IN BINOCULAR VIEW --

Ronny focuses on the cage. The crowd parts down the middle. He sees Ms. Daisy, looking voluptuous as ever. WE HEAR something like: "Kiss You All Over" by Exile.

Ms. Daisy grips a set of bars and tugs futilely on them, causing her breasts to jiggle.

END MUSIC

BACK TO SCENE

Rick watches Ronny closely, trying to read his face. Rick sees Ronny's eyes widen with surprise.

RONNY
You gotta be kiddin' me.

RICK
What? What's happening?

RONNY
It's... Isabel.

RICK
Isabel?

RONNY
(chuckles)
Hey, what do you know? Suave Lady saved her life, after all.

Rick snatches the binoculars away from Ronny.

IN BINOCULAR VIEW --

Rick sees Isabel. She steps out of view. Lo and behold, Gertrude appears behind her.

BACK TO SCENE

RICK
It's Gertrude! She's alive!

MIGHTY RUFUS (O.S.)
Not for long.

The sound of guns COCKING takes them by surprise. SOLDIERS have them surrounded. Mighty Rufus steps forward.

INT. MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - LATER

Rick and the others enter the command center, being jostled forward by SOLDIERS. One soldier carries Ivan's nail gun. Another carries their duffel bag.

General Booth approaches the captives.

GENERAL BOOTH

What do we got here?

MIGHTY RUFUS

We found them staked out near the school. Looks like they were planning a rescue.

GENERAL BOOTH

Trying to deprive my babies?

The soldier with the duffel bag steps forward. Shows the contents of the bag to the general. He reaches in the bag. Pulls out a pipe bomb.

GENERAL BOOTH

This is some pretty serious stuff.

RICK

Not as serious as what happened at Centralia.

RONNY

Yeah. We know all about Pandora's Box. You should be rotting in jail right now. You're a murderer!

General Booth seems impressed by their apparent knowledge. He pulls out his lighter and lights a cigar.

GENERAL BOOTH

Centralia was a minor set back. I admit, relying on rogue rats in the past was a mistake.

A MONITOR, shows the special CARGO TRUCK entering the football field. The back of the truck aligns with the cage.

GENERAL BOOTH

These are my alpha rats. They obey my voice. I am their shepherd. They will keep the rogue rats in check.

RICK

You're not getting away with this.

GENERAL BOOTH

The President of the United States thinks aliens landed. I reported back that these extra-terrestrials are hostile, but I have it all under control.

(chortles)

I've already gotten away with it.

Mighty Rufus opens the door to a small refrigerator. It's stocked with sticks of butter and jars of jam. He commences to make the general's favorite snack.

Rick glances at a different monitor.

RICK
Do you really have it all under
control?

INT./EXT. - FOOTBALL FIELD - ENCAMPMENT - SAME

Giant Ms. Cartwright approaches. Everyone feels the ground
QUAKING beneath them with each booming FOOTFALL.

INSIDE THE CAGE

Gertrude is beside herself. She doesn't believe her eyes.
Carlito stands next to her.

GERTRUDE
Is that my -- ?

CARLITO
Yep. That's your grandma.

IN THE MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

General Booth notices Rick's bewilderment. He turns to view
the monitor. He immediately brings a two-way radio to his
mouth.

GENERAL BOOTH
We have a grower! Get a copter in
the air! Bring it down immediately!

GUNFIRE ensues outside the command center.

RONNY
Leave her alone!

Ronny breaks away from the soldiers. Lunges at the general.
Mighty Rufus grabs Ronny by the throat.

RICK
Let him go!

Ronny gasps for air. Rick struggles to break free from his
captors.

GENERAL BOOTH

Kill him.

MIGHTY RUFUS

With pleasure.

MS. CARTWRIGHT (O.S.)

(booming voice)

I smell butter!

SUDDENLY --

the mobile command center is struck. BAM! It splits in two and tumbles over on its side. The duffel bag soars through the air, emptying out most of its contents.

Ms. Cartwright's lets out a thunderous GROWL.

MS. CARTWRIGHT

I want butter! For my cookies!

Rick and his small group slowly recover. When they finally come to, they seize the opportunity to escape the command center. Rick spots Ivan's nail gun, the duffel bag, and the general's lighter. He snatches them up just before climbing out.

General Booth slowly blinks open his eyes. Mighty Rufus stands to his feet and exits the mobile command center.

WITHIN THE ENCAMPMENT

GUNFIRE continues. The bullets bounce off Ms. Cartwright's skin. She kicks a military truck. It rolls over, crushing a group of SOLDIERS.

A HELICOPTER PILOT climbs into a military helicopter. The propellers begin to whirl. Ms. Cartwright reaches for the helicopter before the propellers have a chance to reach full speed. She heaves it across the sky. It SMASHES into the high school.

IN MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

General Booth finds his two-way radio. Struggles to bring it to his mouth.

GENERAL BOOTH

Release my babies!

AT BACK ENTRANCE OF HUMAN CAGE

Rick and the others approach a locked gate with a PADLOCK.

CLAIRE

Rick! Get us outta here!

The back door to the CARGO TRUCK slowly opens, releasing the giant ALPHA RATS.

Rick spreads open the duffel bag. Not much in there. A few pipe bombs. Boxes of ammo. A nail gun cartridge. His face shows frustration. He approaches the padlock.

RICK

Get back!

He aims the nail gun. Nails ricochet against the padlock.

RICK

It's not working!

DEUCE

Plan B!

Deuce grabs a set of bars. Julie follows his lead. Together, they manage to pry the bars apart. Not wide enough for Julie, but enough for Claire and Abigail, who squeeze through. Julie and Carlito step aside, letting other CAPTIVES climb out.

Rats enter the cage through the front entry, toppling a few captives. Frantic SCREAMS fill the atmosphere.

The ground QUAKES from Ms. Cartwright's FOOTFALLS as she walks by.

Gertrude climbs up the side of the cage to get her grandmother's attention.

GERTRUDE

Grandma! Over here!

RICK

What are you doing?!

GERTRUDE

Cover me!

Rick aims the nail gun at the alpha rats still pouring into the cage. Pulls the trigger. A few rats are struck before the nail gun is yanked away. Mighty Rufus lifts Rick by his hair and pins him against the cage.

MIGHTY RUFUS

Nice toy.

He aims the nail gun at Rick. Presses the trigger. CLICK. It's empty. He ditches the nail gun. Pulls back his arm. His fist is caught by Deuce.

DEUCE

Pick on someone your own size.

Mighty Rufus releases Rick, who falls on his butt. Deuce punches Rufus with all his might -- it does nothing.

MIGHTY RUFUS

No one is my size.

He uppercuts Deuce, sending him soaring through the air. He lands, unconscious.

Mighty Rufus turns to face the others.

Gertrude YELLS from the top of the cage.

GERTRUDE

Grandma! Over here! Help!

The cage sparks with bullets.

Ms. Cartwright spots her granddaughter. She reaches for the cage. Tears it asunder. One side of the cage topples over and pins Rufus to the ground. The captives begin to disperse. Rats topple a few of them before they can escape.

An alpha rat eyes Gertrude. Carlito notices the rat about to pounce on her. He quickly shields her as it lunges. It topples Carlito. Takes a chunk from his shoulder. He SCREAMS.

Rick grabs the last nail cartridge from the duffel bag. Snatches up the nail gun. Loads it. Shoots the alpha rat.

Carlito struggles to his feet. Rick and Gertrude aid him.

Rick grabs the remaining pipe bombs from the duffel bag and stuffs them in his pockets. He glances at the school. Takes notice of the helicopter smashed into the wall -- it's an entrance.

RICK

I have an idea!

He looks over at Ronny.

RICK
We gotta lure these rats in the school!

RONNY
How?!

RICK
I need some cheese, buddy!

RONNY
Fuck you!

RICK
Can you think of a better way?!

RONNY
It'll never work.

Ronny unzips his pants. Pulls down his undies.

The alpha rats come to a sudden stop. Begin sniffing the air. Stampede toward Ronny.

RONNY
(pulling up pants)
Oh, shit.

Ronny darts toward the smashed wall. He's followed by Rick, Carlito, Claire, Abigail, Gertrude, Regina, Julie, and Isabel (THE GROUP). Bullets pepper around them as they enter through the crumbled wall.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The group rushes down the hallway. The alpha rats THUNDER behind them.

RICK
Come on!

Armed soldiers turn the corner, cutting them off. Bullets pepper around them as they dart down another hallway.

The alpha rats close in.

RICK
Get to the boiler room! I'll hold them off!

Rick brings up the nail gun. Nails tear into the rat horde, keeping them at bay while the rest of the group escapes down the hallway. The group enters through a set of double doors.

The nail gun CLICKS. It's empty.

RICK

Shit.

He sprints toward the double doors with the rats trailing closely behind. He enters

THE POOL AREA

and shoves the nail gun through the pull handles. The rats try profusely to barge their way in. Chunks of metal fly off the nail gun. It won't hold for long.

Rick makes his way down to

THE BOILER ROOM

where the group uneasily glance over Pete's clothes and skeletal remains.

RONNY

They got Pete.

Rick rushes to the gas furnace. There's an EMERGENCY EXIT nearby.

RICK

Get ready to run.

He aligns the pipe bombs atop the gas furnace. Intertwines the wicks. He takes the drawing from his pocket. Shapes it into a straw. Tucks one end of the straw underneath the wicks.

CARLITO

This reminds me of Moon Mountain Snipers.

Rick lights the exposed end of the straw.

RICK

Let's go!

GENERAL BOOTH (O.S.)

No one's going anywhere.

General Booth stands at the emergency exit with a pistol drawn. His SOLDIERS fall behind, aiming their guns.

Rick and the group step away from the furnace.

The general approaches the straw. Extinguishes the flame just before it reaches the twined wicks.

GENERAL BOOTH
 (holding out hand)
 You have three seconds to return my
 lighter. One... two...

Rick hands it over. The general lights a cigar. Pockets the lighter.

GENERAL BOOTH
 There's many things that I
 tolerate. Thievery isn't one.

He aims his pistol at Rick.

SUDDENLY --

several ROGUE RATS pounce out of the darkness and topple the general and his soldiers. GUNFIRE ensues. The group rushes back upstairs to

THE POOL AREA

just as the alpha rats BURST through the double doors, snapping the nail gun in half.

The group runs around the pool, trying random doors. The alpha rats eventually trap them from both directions.

RONNY
 Suave Lady!

ISABEL
 What?!

Rick reaches into Isabel's pocket. Pulls out her perfume bottle. Sprays it on himself.

RICK
 Quick! Put this on! It'll keep them
 away!

ISABEL
 Are you crazy?!

They pass the perfume around. Before Gertrude can spray herself, Isabel snatches the bottle away.

ISABEL
 Not you, bitch.

Aware of the situation, Rick quickly pulls Gertrude in to himself and embraces her as the rats surround them, HISSING.

The group, huddled together, shimmies toward one of the exits. The general appears from the boiler room, bloody beyond recognition.

GENERAL BOOTH

Where do you think you're going? My babies are still hungry.

He points his pistol at the group. Ronny recalls his conversation with Ms. Daisy from the day before.

RONNY (V.O.)

How 'bout another chance, Ms. Daisy? To prove myself.

MS. DAISY (V.O.)

After tomorrow morning, you'll have plenty of chances to prove yourself. Not just here, but everywhere.

RONNY (V.O.)

If you say so.

MS. DAISY (V.O.)

I know so. Because I believe in you.

Her last statement echoes in Ronny's head.

RONNY

(to self)

This is gonna hurt.

General Booth pulls the trigger. BLAM! Ronny shields the group. Takes the bullet. Collapses.

RICK

Noooooo!

SUDDENLY --

two HAIRLESS RATS (little Joe Pesci and little Kate Moss) leap through the air, toppling the general from behind. The general and both rats tumble into the pool, SPLASHING the group.

Rick smells himself.

RICK

Oh-no.

Julie throws Ronny over her shoulder.

RICK

Run!

They dart toward the main pool exit, barely evading attacks from the rats. Little Joe Pesci and little Kate Moss climb out of the pool. General Booth floats face down. The alpha rats scuffle with the hairless rats.

RONNY

(smiling weakly)

Little Joe Pesci. Little Kate
Moss...

...His voice trails off. His eyes close.

When the group reaches the exit, Carlito HOLLERS from the other end of the pool. A wall of battling rats separate them. The general's body has been drawn to the edge of the pool.

CARLITO

(holds up lighter)

Get outta here! This place is going
boom!

RICK

What are you doing?!

CARLITO

I'm not becoming a walking corpse!

He dashes down the boiler room steps. The alpha rats continue fighting little Joe Pesci and little Kate Moss.

Rick and the group rush out of the pool area.

IN THE HALLWAY

SOLDIERS seem to come at them from all angles.

RICK

The rooftop! Come on!

The group heads upstairs. Bullets pepper around them.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

Rick and the group sprint for the fixed ladder at the edge of the school building.

As they approach it, they see SOLDIERS climbing up.

IN THE BOILER ROOM

Carlito steps over a pile of dead rats and soldiers. He approaches the furnace. Kicks a gas pipe out of place. The pipe HISSES. Behind him, a dead SOLDIER stands up.

ON THE SCHOOL ROOFTOP

The group is surrounded by soldiers and Mighty Rufus.

MIGHTY RUFUS

You have nowhere else to go!

Julie lies Ronny down. Regina checks his breathing.

REGINA

We're losing him!

IN THE BOILER ROOM

Carlito thumbs the general's lighter. It won't spark -- it's water logged. He smacks it against his palm. Tries again. Nothing. The dead soldier GROANS. Carlito spins around. The zombie bites him. They fall to the floor.

ON THE SCHOOL ROOFTOP

Julie cracks her knuckles.

JULIE

This jarhead is mine.

Rick glances at his best friend, despondent.

RICK

No, Julie. This is my battle. I'm tired of running away from people like him. Win or lose, at least, I can say that I tried.

Gertrude grins, admiring his bravery. Rick turns and faces Mighty Rufus. Begins taking steps toward him, fists clenched.

Mighty Rufus laughs in disbelief. The soldiers join him.

MIGHTY RUFUS

You wanna fight me, kid?

Rick brings up his fists.

RICK
No. But I will.

MIGHTY RUFUS
Tell ya what. I'll let you have the
first punch. How's that sound?

He leans forward.

MIGHTY RUFUS
Give me your best shot.

Rick winds up. Before he takes a swing, Ms. Cartwright's hand
CRASHES down on Mighty Rufus. SPLAT!

The gruesome sight causes Abigail to dry heave.

The soldiers aim their weapons at the group. Ms. Cartwright
cups her hands around them, shielding them from GUNFIRE.

Ms. Cartwright scoops up the group and whisks them away. As
they approach the edge of the school parking lot, Gertrude
locks eyes with Isabel.

GERTRUDE
Not you, bitch.

She shoves Isabel out of her grandmother's grasp. Isabel
plummets and lands in a dumpster filled with garbage.

IN THE BOILER ROOM

Carlito futilely tries to fend off the zombie. More dead
SOLDIERS rise to their feet. He sees GRENADES attached to
several of them. This gives him an idea. As the zombies stoop
down to make a feast of him, he reaches out and pulls the pin
from a grenade.

CARLITO
So long, pendejos!

He HEARS alpha rats heading down the steps, SNARLING and
GROWLING.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - SAME

Ms. Cartwright STOMPS off into the darkness of the night as
the entire school explodes behind her. KABOOM!

INT. HOSPITAL - RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "TOLEDO, OHIO - ONE WEEK LATER."

Ronny lies on a hospital bed, looking up at the television. There's news coverage of the recent incident. The bottom of the screen reads: "ALIENS WREAK HAVOC IN DEFIANCE, OHIO." A NEWS ANCHOR reports...

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)
 ...Officials are asking for anyone
 with information about the alien
 attack to please come forward...

PEOPLE in hazmat suits stand around GIANT FOOTPRINTS.

Rick and Gertrude enter, holding hands. Rick grabs the TV remote from Ronny's food tray. Turns off the television.

RICK
 That's enough of that.

RONNY
 Hey, guys.

RICK
 How ya feelin'?

RONNY
 Not bad, considering.

RICK
 I still can't believe you took a
 bullet for me. You're an idiot.

Rick smiles.

RONNY
 What the hell? Did you just smile?

GERTRUDE
 Shhhhh. Don't jinx it.

She chuckles.

RONNY
 How's your grandma doing?

GERTRUDE
 She's almost back to normal.

RONNY
 That's good to know.

GERTRUDE

She doesn't remember much of that night. Maybe, that's best.

RONNY

Yeah.

GERTRUDE

Hey, we have a surprise for you.

RONNY

Ms. Daisy in a bikini?

Ms. Daisy, looking picture perfect, steps in with flowers.

MS. DAISY

Yes, minus the bikini.

RONNY

Uhh, I didn't mean that. Sorry, Ms. Daisy.

MS. DAISY

What have I told you?

RONNY

Sorry doesn't cut it. Take ownership of my actions.

Ms. Daisy grins, impressed with his answer.

MS. DAISY

So, you have been listening.

RONNY

Thank you for believing in me, Ms. Daisy.

MS. DAISY

And thank you for saving my life. How can I repay you?

RONNY

Let me think about that. I'm sure something will come up.

MS. DAISY

I'll start with this.

She plants a kiss on Ronny's forehead. Ronny glances down her shirt. WE HEAR something like: "Atomic Dog" by George Clinton.

RONNY
I'll take those flowers now.

Ms. Daisy hands them over. Ronny lays the flowers across his crotch to cover his boner.

MS. DAISY
I really must be going. Bye, you guys.

They say their goodbyes to her. She exits the room.

END MUSIC

Julie enters, carrying two slushies.

JULIE
Hi, Ronny. I brought you a slushy.

RONNY
Thanks.

Julie places his slushy on the food tray.

JULIE
You can drink it whenever. Or not.
It's entirely up to you. They
didn't have wild cherry. Sorry.

Ronny reaches out and grabs Julie by the hand.

RONNY
I appreciate what you did for me.

JULIE
You would've done the same.

RONNY
There's no way I could've carried
you.

She yanks away her hand, offended.

JULIE
What's that suppose to mean?

RONNY
Girl, it means you're stronger than
me. What else would it mean?

JULIE
Oh.

A gorgeous NURSE steps in with sponge bath items.

NURSE

Time for your sponge bath, Ronny.

WE HEAR something like: "Boombastic" by Shaggy.

Julie snatches the sponge away from the nurse.

JULIE

I got this.

RONNY

Hold on! Wait a minute!

END MUSIC

Rick and Gertrude chuckle. They embrace. Kiss.

INT./EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - SAME

The school is leveled. Only a few walls remain intact. A HAZMAT CLEAN-UP CREW rummages through the rubble. One of the CREW WORKERS uncovers something. Dusts it off. It's PANDORA'S BOX.

BLACK SCREEN

A low-frequency HUM reverberates. The HUM switches to a high pitched SIGNAL and tapers off...

FADE OUT.

THE END